



INTERPOLATIONS OF DALIT CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE SELECTED NOVELS OF MULK RAJ ANAND

THESIS

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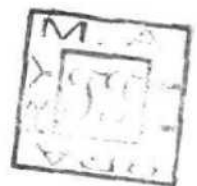
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This is to certify that the thesis entitled "*Interpolations of Dalit Consciousness in the Selected Novels of Mulk Raj Anand*" submitted by **Mohd Irshad Alam** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of PhD in English has been completed under my supervision.

This is a result of his independent efforts. To the best of my knowledge, this is his original work and is suitable for submission for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English.


(Md Rizwan Khan)
Associate Professor

THESIS

*Dedicated to all those
Who
Live on Margins...*

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Irshad Alam

Mohd. Irshad Alam

Chapter –1
STATEMENT OF INTENT

Chapter – 1

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Mulk Raj Anand is one of those committed Indian novelists who wrote for the liberation of humanity, which can be fairly discussed as protest writings. In the present thesis it is aimed to take up three novels of Anand and investigate the author's relationship with the corpus of Dalit understanding. The title of the present thesis makes use of the word 'interpolation' which stands for a larger meaning including modifying, inserting and clarifying. As per the title this thesis highlights the literary contribution of Anand in the development of Dalit Consciousness and clarifies the way these two areas get assimilated in the field of English studies. Knowingly, it can be said that Anand's novels presided the emergence of Dalit Consciousness as a part of English studies and his writings largely participated in the establishment of various notions regarding the issues of marginalized communities in India. As he was the product of various philosophical movements and behaviours including Marxism, Gandhism and the teachings of Tagore, his writings portrayed the real themes and issue of Dalit society and highlighted the tendencies of social outcasts. It was like the formative development of Apartheid Movement through various writings of protest. It is also true that in most of the cases the writers and poets initiate the discussion on certain social issues, which later become the field of study and bear the name of theories. The nicety of a literary artist dwell in the manner he or she establishes a farfetched relationship with the harmonic and disharmonic tendencies in the society and observes the blemished social face with acute keenness. Anand was a well known Marxist and his ideas were also influenced by the Nehruvian Socialism, which is clearly displayed through his writings. The euphemism that attacked the Dalit for a

long time in history started dying with the emergence of such writings and political efforts like that of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi, who saw Dalits as Harijan or the sons of God, marked the major development of his brain frame and his ideas occur variously in Anand's Novels. A little before when Ambedkar started protesting for the rights of Dalits, Anand kept himself busy in presenting the life of Bakha and Munoo as characters demanding a death in peace beyond a life in disturbance. The novels that have been discussed in the present thesis provide space to the ideals of Gandhi, Tagore and Marx in order to develop a stream of thoughts favouring the upliftment of weaker sections of the society largely comprised of the Dalits. Anand's vision is a blend of various occidental and oriental philosophies, which focused on the real problems of human beings. It should also be known that his favouring the plight of Dalits is not based on the clear categorisation of castes and he believes that the problems of Dalit conditioning are also shared by the upper caste people due to their financial instability. Anand's concern is for all those who are marginalized on the grounds of various hierarchies including social, economic and political. But the major establishment of Dalit Consciousness believes that Dalit life encounters with all these hierarchical tendencies and hence resides in the dark woods of confirmed sorrow. I have tried my best in highlighting a cross line between the existence of Anand's fiction and Dalit Consciousness and believe that this work will help the future researchers in formulating their ideas about Mulk Raj Anand and his fiction. In the light of these theoretical intersections Dalit theoretical and literary quantum that emerged after some of Anand's major novels, provides significant interpolations to his novels. These interpolations need to be theorised and documented in order to posit Anand appropriately on the map of literary and Dalit thought.

The present study is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter-2 discusses the historical, cultural and literary development of Dalit consciousness. This chapter draws a meeting line between Anand's writings and popular themes of Dalit consciousness.

Chapter-3 furnishes a survey of M. R. Anand's Oeuvre. It discusses the major themes and ideas of M. R. Anand and his famous writings. He was influenced by Gandhism and Marxism, and his writings reflect a genuine concern with marginalised communities at the level of language, theme and technique.

Chapter-4, 5 and 6 study the interpolation of Dalit consciousness in Anand's novels like *Untouchable*, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*. These novels reflect a direct and indirect reference to the popular political and social issues of marginalisation, which mark the interpolation of Dalit consciousness.

Chapter-7 is a summary of the study to draw a conclusion. This chapter also provides recommendations and suggestions for further research in this area.

Chapter –2

**DALIT CONSCIOUSNESS IN INDIA: AN
ACCOUNT OF HISTORICAL, THEORETICAL
AND LITERARY JOURNEY**

Chapter – 2

DALIT CONSCIOUSNESS IN INDIA: AN ACCOUNT OF HISTORICAL, THEORETICAL AND LITERARY JOURNEY

2.0 Introductory: Literature has always been a medium of expressing pain and more than that a way of resisting the existing oppression throughout history. A research-based discussion on Dalit consciousness may begin with the following “Revolution” by Arjun Dangle:

We used to be their friends
When, clay pots hung from our necks,
Brooms tied to our rumps,
We made our rounds through the Upper Lane
Calling “Ma-bap, Johar, Ma-bap”
We fought with crows, never even giving them the snot from our noses
As we dragged out the Upper Lane’s dead cattle,
Skinned it neatly
And shared the meat among ourselves.
They used to love us then. We warred with jackals-dogs-vultures-kites
Because we ate their share.

Today we see a root -to -crown change.
Crows-jackals-dog-vultures-kites
Are our closest friends.
The Upper Lane doors are closed to us.

 "Shout victory" to the Revolution

"Shout victory"

"Burn, burn those who strike at tradition." (*Anthology of Dalit* 43-44)

Arjun Dangle, a young member of Dalit Panthers, talks in this poem about the miserable condition of Dalits, who used to put clay pots hung to their necks to spit in that and brooms tied to their bodies to erase their footprints. They used to perform these duties because they were untouchables; even their spittle and footprints may pollute the grounds. They were also bound to carry the carcasses of cattle from the village. The title of this poem indicates that this is a revolutionary poem, and it talks about the revolt of untouchables against tradition. Unlike usual greetings of 'Ram Ram' or 'Namaste', the Mahar uses a special greeting 'Johar Ma-bap' (hail, mother and father). The last verse is very ironic. "Shout victory to the Revolution" 'is a quotation from a Brahman poet. Dangle's point is that while the elite call for the revolution, those who revolt are burned.' (*Anthology of Dalit* 44)

2.1 Background to the Development of Dalit Theory: The term 'Dalit' is collectively used for the marginalised, downtrodden, molested and unprivileged communities, whose history had encountered a series of traumatic episodes. Throughout history of Indian culture and society, Dalits have been called by various tags as the chandala, Ati sudra, Avarna Panchamas, Antyas and Antyavasin. They were designated as "Broken men" by Ambedkar and "harijan" by Gandhi. The British called them 'untouchables' and identified them as the 'Depressed' class and they were categorised as Schedule Castes (SCs) and Schedule Tribes (STs) by the constitution of India. Dalit is a recent term adopted by these marginalised people themselves to

indicate the fact that they belong to the most oppressed, exploited and unprivileged section of Indian society. Apart from its common use, the term 'Dalit' today is specially used for those people who on the basis of caste distinction have been identified as "outcastes". They were outcastes because they were not according to the makers of the system apt enough to be reckoned in the caste structure of Indian society. According to Sonia Sikha Dalit is "a group identity that has emerged in India out of the struggle for recognition and respect on the part of communities suffering oppression and discrimination as a result of caste. It is the self-chosen name for a socio-political identity meant to encompass, as well as replace, a variety of ascribed lower and, specially, outcaste ("Untouchable") identity groupings" (*Philosophy of Race* IV 253).

Shudras or 'Dalits' have been deprived of all the privileges that had been executed by the Brahmins or upper caste Hindus in the course of history. A Shudra had to present himself in the service of other castes and eventually the servitude was proclaimed to be their permanent condition. Any food prepared by a shudra is not edible for the Brahmins. A shudra was not allowed to become wealthy because thereby he might cause pain to the people of other castes. There may have been some other popular opinion like if a person dies with a shudra food in the stomach, he will be born again as a pig or a shudra and after consuming such a food a Brahmin might be so unwise as to have a conjugal intercourse and consequently the offspring will belong to the shudra and the Brahmins would not be able to help him to reach heaven. The life of a shudra was considered beyond the boundary of moral influence and a member of the first three upper castes was not supposed to travel with shudras. Shudras were considered to carry bad vibes around them as they might disturb the

normal environment of a home. According to Kautilya, “a shudra calling himself a Brahmin shall have his eyes destroyed by poison or shall pay the heavy fine of eight hundred “Pansas” and if he violates a Brahmin female, he shall be burnt to death. If he criminally assaults a Brahmin the offending limb shall be cut” (Ghurye 91-92). ‘Vashistha’, another Hindu law maker, forbids any of the first three castes to marry a shudra female. Some other religious books declare that a shudra committing adultery with the woman of the first three castes shall suffer capital punishment or shall be burnt alive, and tied up with straw. Such union according to Vashishtha leads to the degradation of the family in this life and to loss of heavenly bliss in the next life. To him the issue of a Brahmin male and a shudra female is as impure as a corpse.

Manu, in *Manusmriti*, a canonical book on Brahminical Law, has advised shudras to serve gently the three upper castes and a shudra who is unable to perform his duty can be identified as an evil spirit, feeding on moths. If a man of a lower caste follows an occupation of a higher caste, Manu laid down the injunction that the king shall deprive him of his property and banish him. Manu’s version of the caste system seemed to have been endorsed by the King Rama. As stated earlier, in the Ramayana, the killing of shudra, samvuka by the king Rama is a classic example. Untouchables or Dalits, unlike the other castes, are separated from the rest of Indian society and their separation has certain conditions like, they do live outside the village but not in the jungle. They are not allowed to walk aimlessly in the villages, but they can work there. They are not allowed to take part in religious programmes, but they are subjects of the same religious system. In some cases they keep the evil spirit away like a ‘pariah’ for example uses a ‘parai’ drum, whenever there is a need to keep away the

devil. In real life they are more inferior than outcaste. The culture of the untouchables lies beneath the mainstream Indian culture.

If we were to trace the historical pattern of this social structure, we should start from the first half of twentieth century; when there was a strong protest against the social power called fascism in the 1940s and this ended when the two cities of Japan were destroyed by Atomic energy known as Heroshima and Nagasaki and this Atomic fear captured all human developments for years. But with the emergence of the liberated nations in Asia and Africa and the success achieved by many companions of socialism a period of hope came. Soviet Union developed socialism with a brutal tyranny; and socialism spread in large areas not only by the revolt of working class but also by the march of Red Army. When the Indian Independence movement was in its matured phase, the nation makers did think about good and popular socialistic independence. However, within India itself there were many problems and differences and one of these problems was the division of society on the basis of caste. In relation to this some social leaders tried to win some share in liberation for the untouchables of India.

- a) *As the influence of Marxism was seen in most of the world, in India too, it affected greatly. The liberation of oppressed and exploited groups as it was realized through socialism was rampant and it was defined as collective ownership of the means of production and working class's share in power. This influence contrasted communism which could not play a definite role in solving the problems of India. As in the Third World countries, the domination of nationalist party came to an end replacing the party of working class which claimed to represent the oppressed masses; and socialism came to imply the*

control of public and planning of industrialization on the model of western capitalism. Marxism was very much responsible for making our leaders attentive towards the marginalised and unprivileged sections of the Indian Society.

- b) The division on the basis of religion like the Hindu-Muslim demarcation was prevailing and overruling political reality in the 1940s. The constitution of India was mainly concerned with social realities of the time and Hindu religion with open and implicit acceptance was the central religious-cultural identity of India. In progressive Congress Gandhi was with the view that Hinduism be reformed in a way that both communities may live in harmony and Nehru was in favour of secularism and modernity which defined the nation with transcended class, feudal and backward religious-cultural identities. The communists emphasised on class and followed Nehruvian idea and both communists and socialists considered realities of Hindu and Muslim putting aside the issues of caste and communal realities. Independence and partition of India did not do good to the marginalized groups and with this background Ambedkar started Dalit Movement that raised untouchables' issues and fought for the rights of the Dalits but it was not much effective due to Nehruvian ideological hegemony and upper caste dominations. During the 1940s, it worked only as a pressure group.

These were some of the crucial problems which more or less affected the historical development of the Dalit movement in India. It can be said that the Indian social system is full of multi-identity situation, where everybody falls in more than

one identity. In the upcoming chapters, we ferret out the various aspects of dalit conditioning.

2.2 Defining Dalits: There is no discussion of the Dalit in any Vedic literature. To Ambedkar, the Dalits are the *Avarnas*, those who do not fall under the sky of the *savarna* system and he identifies them as 'Broken Men', who remained outsiders and belonged to the tribes and communities, which have always been different from those residing inside the main village. According to '*Mausmriti*' and ancient legal and religious text coming after the '*Vedas*', '*Upnishads*', '*Puranas*' and '*Dharmshastras*', India is defined as an unequal society since ancient times. After the arrival of Aryans, the Indian society was stratified into four varnas: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. 'Varna' is a Sanskrit term its literal meaning is colour and it indicates that the caste system was based on racial discrimination. Shudras were not given the right to own property, receive education and options of occupation and as they were the marginalized inhabitants, so they were treated like slaves. '*Manusmriti*', which is written by Manu, says that the listening and recitation of '*Vedas*' is strictly prohibited for the low caste Hindus. Manu is considered as a hardliner, who forcefully highlighted the system of caste division in ancient India and he demarcated the Indian society on the basis of duties. Shudras were assigned to serve the three upper races with selflessness. A Brahmin comes earlier than a Kshatriya (second higher caste) out of the mouth of Lord Brahma, the creator of the universe. A Brahmin is a knower of the '*Vedas*' and he becomes the religious master of the globe. Kshatriyas come, next to the Brahmin, from the arms of the Lord Brahma. The Vaishyas are the third in the row that sprang out of the thighs of this supreme creator. Finally, shudras appear from the feet of Brahma to fulfil the cause of servitude. The myth behind the emergence of

castes like in the manner--out of mouth, arms, thighs and feet of the Lord Brahma--aimed at defining the structural compartments of the classes in ancient Indian society. Untouchables stood at the bottom to carry the commands of all the three upper castes ranked in order. Other Hindu religious texts like *Vedas*, *Upanishads* and *Bhagavad Gita* do not highlight the birth-based caste system. *Rig-Veda* demonstrates amply the unity and harmony of human race. With the passage of time, the warmth and compassion of Hindu scriptures turned to the back forming the way for a document like '*Manusmriti*' to become a text of significance, in the field of law.

This categorisation of Indian society has prevailed for a long period of time and the low castes were condemned to severe degradations in their public life. Absolutely humiliated, they were identified with various titles like 'Harijans' as proposed by Mahatma Gandhi, 'Depressed classes' by the British, 'Chamar' means 'Cobbler' in Oriya and 'Mahar' in Maratha of Indian languages. The term 'scheduled caste', as applicable to these people had its origin in April, 1935. The British government in India, during the colonial period, took the names of certain castes and put them under the category of 'Scheduled Castes'. Nevertheless, 'Dalit', the term more synonymous with marginalized, is a common word in most of Indian languages to speak about the vast oppression over Dalits by higher classes. But in due course if a person from this oppressed life gets emancipated, through the accumulation of wealth and improves the standard of living, he should not move back to that line any longer. In the same manner, we can say that if a person from the higher caste goes on living in the state of oppression over the years, he should be discussed in the category of 'dalit'. This dividing line between Dalits and Non-Dalits can be written as the division between 'haves' and 'have-nots' according to Marxist philosophy, which designates

itself as science rather a field of philosophy. This conflicting scenario should develop the increased volume of social categorisation, not only in India but in other south Asian nations like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Afghanistan. During 1970s, the 'Dalit Panther Movement' in Maharashtra of India, took its root to champion the cause of Dalit in the creative pursuits. It borrows its moral support from the writings of Ambedkar, who believed that 'the root cause of untouchability lies in a pronounced cultural or racial difference of contempt and hatred coupled with a close economic dependence of the inferior society on the superior one'. The term 'dalit' has been redefined from a letter addressed to Zelliott by Gangadhar Pantawane, professor of Marathi, Milind College, Marathawada University, Aurangabad and founder editor of 'Asmitadarsh' (Ideal of Intellect Ego), the pioneering journal on dalit literature. He says:

To 'me dalit is not caste. He is a man exploited by the social and economic traditions of this country. He does not believe in God, Rebirth, Soul, Holy Books-teaching separatism, Fate and Heaven because they made him a slave. He does believe in humanism. Dalit is a symbol of Change and revolution. (*Dalits and African American* 56)

In a wider perspective it is a counter move, an anti-thesis to combat the extreme philosophical and narrow theological aspects from the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Puranas*, *Tantras* and other scriptures, which prefers a hierarchised version of society. It is receiving power in the form of an intellectual substance to uphold the cause of a rational and scientific base in the field of creativity. The Dalit literature represents a new level of pride, military and sophisticated creativity. It is essentially a way to help the Dalits to achieve a sense of cultural identity. 'Dalitness' is in a situation of

challenges and is a matter of appreciating and assessing the identity of a being. Hence, it is obvious, the intellectual property rights as yet the natural monopoly of 'haves' and 'have-nots' should be reviewed. In a sense, the emerging metropolitan intellectualism should forget its earlier insensitive role and take up the cause of Dalit activities. The field of literary expressions starts from ancient Indian society to the marginalized shudras, from individualism to collectivism should undergo a striking revolution.

The word 'Dalit' comes from the Sanskrit word 'dal' which means 'broken', 'ground', 'suppressed, or 'crushed. Dalit is a designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as low caste or untouchable. One section of Indian society which is counted as a major part of this country and culture; and which is the most exploited and oppressed section by the upper castes especially Brahmins, is known as Dalits. There are several other terms for Dalit, like 'untouchable', 'outcaste', 'kanjjar', 'bhangi', 'harijan', and 'chura'. Dalit is socially the more acceptable term, adopted to express the systemic impression which people without caste have tolerated for thousands of years in Indian culture. With regard to the use of this word, there are different opinions for example at one place it is said that, it was first used by Dr. Ambedkar while some sources claim that it was the follower of Arya Samaj, Swami Sharaddhanand who first coined the word 'Dalit' (Bechain 1997:27).

The linguistic history of the term Dalit goes back to the ancient Indian religious texts when they were known as 'shudras', 'atishudras', 'chandalas', 'antyaj' and so on. At another place it was said that this word 'Dalit' was first used by Jyotiba Phule and later by Swami Vivekanand and it acquired its new meaning only in the 1970s, when it was used by Dalit writers. Dalit (oppressed or untouchable) is not a

new word and apparently, it was used in the 1930s as a Hindi and Marathi translation of 'depressed classes', a term that the British used for the communities known as the scheduled castes. In 1930, a newspaper was also published for the marginalised classes in Pune called 'Dalit Bandu', meaning a friend of Dalit. The word 'Dalit' was also used by B. R. Ambedkar in his Marathi speeches and the 'Dalit Panthers' revived the term in their 1973 manifesto and stated its references to include the scheduled tribes, Neo-Buddhists, working class people, landless and poor peasants and all those, who are being exploited politically, economically and in the name of religion. We can say that the term Dalit covers a broad definition, including all those communities and ideas which are similarly placed or natural allies.

2.3 Historical Development of Dalit Movement: The historical development of Dalit movement has a great account of rationalism and humanism and its gradual development took place like the way Buddhism revolted against the caste system, the Shashtras and domination of Sanskrit as a language of Brahmins and Knowledge for some. The Dalit liberation movement began in late 19th century:

Though attempts were begun by the dalit castes from the late 19th century to organize themselves, the various sections of the dalit liberation movement really began to take off from the 1920s, in the context of the strong social reform and anti-caste peasantry and the national movement which was beginning to develop a genuine mass base. (Bharat Patankar and Gail Omvelt 12)

Buddhism emphasized the common love towards the nature. More or less, all movements of the times revolted against the Hindu value system, which was responsible for engendering the untouchability and caste system. After Buddhism,

Jainism also revolted against the notions of caste-based differences in the Hindu religious system and Sikhism is also a revolt against the Varna ashram system of caste prejudices. In 15th century, Kabir motivated the social values, rejected the caste system and advocated monotheism. He criticized Hindu Shashtras and imagined of a society based on equality. Jyoti Ba Phule who belonged to the 'Mali community' of Maharashtra realized that it is only education through which Dalits can emancipate themselves and, therefore, he started various schools in Pune and its nearby areas. Some of the Brahmins opposed the education movement of Jyoti Ba Phule and consequently, he exposed the Brahminical literature by writing plays on the exploitation of farmers and praised Christian missionaries for their noble work in school education. Ambedkar also emphasized the importance of education that develops rationality and reason. Once he addressed to Dalit women, "Learn to be clean. Keep from vices. Give education to your children. Instill ambition into them. Inculcate in their minds that they are designed to be great. Remove from them inferiority complexes (*"Indian Journal of Dalit"* 36)". In one of his letters to Gandhi, he talked about the amendment of Shashtras because it dealt with the problems of caste system and Indian social system. But on the contrary Gandhi was in favour of Shashtras therefore a kind of bitterness developed between them.

Ambedkar studied Hindu scriptures and questioned their wisdom. He never considered Rama and Krishna as Indian gods and believed that Hindu 'Varnavayastha' (caste system) had snatched the dignity of the Non-Brahmins; his ideas were critical of Hindu Law book. Ambedkar formed the Indian Labour Party and later Republican Party of India. For Dalits, Ambedkar is everything; like the Moses for them, who led his people out of bondage and ignorance onto the right path, and like a Bodhisattva in

the pantheon of Buddhism. Ambedkar started participating in politics after World War 1, when Russian revolution was on its peak. It was a great age of social and political upheaval and increasing hegemony of the Marxist's socialism in liberation movements. Ambedkar led the liberation movement for the Dalits and rejected the ideological hegemony of non-Dalit socialists. Here is a quote on Ambedkar's movement:

Ambedkar's movement was the most important one that did not stress such an *adi* identity, yet the theme was still a strong one among Mahars. Ambedkar himself, in initiating the later conversion to Buddhism was in a way doing the same thing- rejecting Hinduism and attempting a return to an 'original' and equalitarian Indian religion. Along with this went a strong secular and rationalist stress on equality, the necessity of modern education, the rejection of traditional superstition and traditional ritual subordination. (Bharat Patankar and Gail Omvelt 16)

In the 1920s and 1940s, Ambedkar planned to organize a movement of Mahar and Kumbi against landlords, under the heavy influence of Marxism. During these years, Ambedkar's weekly 'Janta' was filled with the reports of struggles of peasants with capitalists and landlords. He found similarities between Brahminism and Capitalism and regarded these two separately responsible for the exploitation of marginalized classes. The Brahminism is based on cultural and ideological issues while the Capitalism is based on economic issues. Capitalism should be challenged by class struggle and Brahmanism by castes struggles. He said in his address to Mahar community workers at Mahad:

There are in my view two enemies which the workers of this country have to deal with. The two enemies are Brahminism and Capitalism....By Brahminism I do not mean the power, privileges and interests of the Brahmins as a community. By Brahminism I mean the negation of the spirit of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. In that sense, it is rampant in all classes and is not confined to the Brahmin alone though they have been the originators of it. (Bakshi 81-82)

Ambedkar's stand against Brahminism was actually the stand against the tradition that develops slave mentality and class distinction.

2.4 Ambedkar and His Struggle for Dalits: Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891-1956) is known in India as messiah of Dalits. He was born in a British military cantonment of Mhaw, in the central Provinces, which is now in Madhya Pradesh. He was the fourteenth and last child of Ramji Maloji Sakpal and Bhimabai Murbadkar and belonged to the Mahar caste, (a community of Dalits). He went to Government High School Satara, in 1904 and shifted to Bombay. He joined Elphinstone High School from where he passed his Matriculation in 1907 and was married, at the age of 17, to a 9 year old girl. The Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikawad of Baroda gave him scholarship for higher studies and after this Ambedkar joined Elphinstone College, Bombay and passed his B.A. with English and Persian as the subjects. The Maharaja of Baroda sent him for higher studies at Columbia University in 1913, where he obtained his degree of MA. In 1916, he submitted his thesis for the degree of Ph.D entitled 'National Dividend for India: A historical and Analytical Study'. In 1916, he joined the London School of Economics and studied Political Science as a graduate student and in 1920, when he became a Professor of Political Economy, he started a

Marathi fortnightly *Mooknayak* (spokesman of the voiceless) to highlight the cause of the marginalized classes. In 1920, he made a visit to attend the London School of Economics and Political Science and entered Gray's Inn in order to qualify as a barrister. It was in 1921, that he got the degree of M.Sc. in Economics and in 1922, he went to University of Bonn, Germany, for studying Economics; in 1923, he received the degree of D. Sc. in Economics.

When Ambedkar came back to India in 1924, he started practicing at Bombay High Court and founded 'Bahishkrit Hitakarini', (society to serve the interest of outcastes) with its motto 'Educate, Organize and Agitate'. In 1927, a conference was organized at Mahad, a small town in the Konkan region of Maharashtra, known as Mahad Conference which marked his first public protest for the assertion of the rights of untouchables to draw and drink water from public tank. In 1923, Bombay legislative Council passed the resolution that 'the untouchable classes should be allowed to use all public water-places, wells, dharamshalas' but it was not fully implemented. On March 20, 1927 Ambedkar led the untouchables to the Chowdar (water tank) and drank water. In his presidential address, he emphasized on ending of the ideas of highness and lowness. Meanwhile, a rumor was spread that untouchables had entered the 'Vireshwar Temple' and soon villagers gathered and assaulted the untouchables. In his periodical 'Bahishkrit Bharat', he clarified his ideas on various aspects of the movement that he had initiated regarding the untouchables. Finally came the day of great protest on December 25, 1927, when Ambedkar burnt the copies of *Manusmriti* by calling that social, economic, religious and political slavery of untouchables was rooted on those texts too. He also compared the burning of Manuscript to the burning of foreign cloths recommended by Gandhi. In 1930s, he began a new movement and named it 'Nasik Temple Satyagraha', regarding the entry

of untouchables to the Temple. Ambedkar said, in the Yeola conference, on 13 October 1935:

Even this movement to obtain our ordinary rights as human beings and achieve equality in Hindu society has failed. Thus the time has arisen to take the final decision. This weak and lowly status that we occupy is because we are a part of the Hindu society. Therefore, would you not wish to embrace another religion, which will give you equal status, equal rights and fair treatment? Give up your links with Hinduism. Enter a religion where you will obtain peace and dignity. But remember to select only that religion in which you will get equal status, equal opportunity and equal treatment. It was not my fault that I was born an untouchable. But I am determined that I will not die a Hindu.

(11)

The predicament of a dalit leader can be ascertained by reading these words, which proclaim the death of age old customs and tortures. On 14th October 1956 Ambedkar finally converted to Buddhism. After his conversion Ambedkar declared:

By discarding my ancient religion which stood for inequality and oppression today I am reborn. I have no faith in the philosophy of incarnation: and it is wrong and mischievous to say that Budha was incarnation of Vishnu. I am no more a devotee of any Hindu god or goddess. I will not perform Shraddha. I will strictly follow the eight-fold path of Buddha. Buddhism is a true religion and I will lead a life

guided by three principles of knowledge, right path and compassion.

(20-21)

Ambedkar's ideas questioned the Hindu traditions, which were not having any solution for its own engineered problems. This notion manifested the sorrow of a nigger section of society. He died at his Delhi residence on December 6, 1956. On this sad demise Namde Dhasal, a poet composed these lines:

You death is considered monumental
 I saw it from the eyes of a common man
 There was no joy in your death, no sorrow
 The real man lives before death
 The rest is simply dust, swirling dust
 In place of death I am trying to establish
 Beauty.
 This is the proclamation of bread
 This is the parliament's brothel
 This country we call Mother
 Sleeps with the god of wealth
 And time is becoming more orthodox
 The life in my heart become worthless as dust
 Green dreams fade before my eyes
 Now who can we worship? (*Anthology of Dalit* 54-55)

Ambedkar's conversion was not of religious kind but of social and political nature. Babasaheb gives an identity to Dalits, which puts away all the definitions of Brahmanism. Babasaheb's identity of Dalits is the rejection of all the demarcations of

purity and impurity, superiority and inferiority and the characterization of Dalit rulers and 'Rakshasas'. His main intention was to develop worldly emancipation of untouchables which was based on the three principles of Buddhism that attracted him. These principles are: 'understanding against superstitions and supernaturalism', 'love' and 'equality'. His Buddhism was a religion of liberation of the oppressed in society which proclaimed that Dalits will establish their own religion, by rejecting all the hegemonic religions, based on the values of freedom, equality and dignity for all human beings at all times. Ambedkar also gave the ideological identity to the Dalits and it is said that whatever Ambedkar has given to them as a heritage will be the foundation of Dalit philosophy or in other words, it will be the science of Dalits. The Liberation Philosophy of Ambedkar is filled with the pains and aspirations of the Dalits and it will keep inspiring the movements for the rights of the marginalized. It is expected that such ideas must be carried forward by the Dalit intelligentsias in today's India.

2.5 Ambedkarism Vs Gandhism: Gandhi and Ambedkar are the most important thinkers who gave their contributions in the social advancement of the Harijans. Gandhi belonged to Vaishya caste and Ambedkar was born in an untouchable family. Gandhi approached the problem of Dalits from the standpoint of an upper caste Hindu, who wanted to remove untouchability from the society and Ambedkar identified himself with the struggle against the exploitation of Dalits, which the untouchables had been suffering under the monopoly of upper caste Hindus since ages. Gandhi believed that Hinduism needed some reformations including the solution for the problem of casteism but Ambedkar believed that the problem of casteism was a part of Hinduism and was motivated by its sacred texts. During the independence

movement the issue of marginalization was less significant in comparison to other issues but in the post-independent India the problem of marginalized communities became the centre of discussion; however, there were a handful of orthodox Hindus who did overlook this problem.

Mahatma Gandhi devoted his whole life in improving the condition of the untouchables and believed that untouchability was a stain on Hinduism. He rebelled against this inhuman practice and requested the upper caste Hindus to entertain Dalits with due respect. As it was stated by Glifford Bob in the 'introduction' of the book *Dalit Rights are Human Rights* that:

The situation of the Untouchables was an important issue in India's independence struggle, and key conflicts from the 1930s and 1940s still resound in Dalit politics today. For the Congress Party, Mohandas K. Gandhi (not an Untouchable) sought to champion the group. Gandhi, a staunch defender of Hinduism, saw Untouchability as a perversion of Hindu doctrine and sought to reform the religion by urging Hindus to treat all people equally regardless of caste. (6)

Mahatma Gandhi did a lot to bring equality and peace to humanity. Gandhi always stood by the 'untouchables' and harijans. They suffered a lot because their jobs were not liked by the members of the higher castes. They were supposed to be so dirty that even their shadow could befoul the high caste people and therefore they were not allowed to worship in temples and go to hospitals and schools. The untouchable class influenced Gandhi's heart, however, Gandhi belonged to a higher caste his conscience laid him to aid them. Gandhi went totally against the blind

traditions to change the social position of untouchables. He wanted to change the social customs, so he would join company of Harijans and had food with them. He cleaned the public toilets along with harijans. Nobody in the higher caste would have thought of doing that, even in their wildest imaginations. Gandhi showed that by doing a menial job reserved for harijans, one does never become an untouchable. Mahatma Gandhi was of the view that, every human ought to follow the duties assigned to him by God. Gandhi gave Dalits the title 'Harijans' i.e., children of God. The untouchables were not allowed to take water from the main village wells and food and water touched by Dalits was not accepted by any of the upper caste people. Untouchability has always been the matter of great concern for the social and religious reformers in history. A person in search of food should do his duty with great enthusiasm and the rest of the people of the society should not consider him, downtrodden or polluted. Gandhi instructed the untouchables that if they want that people should not treat them as untouchable, they should improve their unhygienic habits because it is to their unhygienic habits people refuse to live with them.

Mulk Raj Anand was very much influenced by Mahatma Gandhi and in his novel *Untouchable*, there is an episode in which Gandhi is addressing a huge mass and giving untouchables the name 'Harijan'. He wishes to be reborn as an untouchable. Gandhiji insisted that Harijans should be allowed to enter the temples. For temple entry according to him is the one spiritual act that would constitute that message of freedom to the untouchables that assure them that they are not outcaste in before God. Gandhi firmly believed that freedom and eradication of untouchability are the two sides of the same coin. One cannot exist without another. Many novelist present Gandhi's philosophy of change of heart in their novels.

In the 1930s and 40s the social and political leadership of India realized untouchability as a problem and found it responsible for the damage of the Indian image in eyes of the world. The desire to end the untouchability started to work and the problems related with untouchability like entry into temples were made public for the common mass, some persons started to undertake fast for the sake of untouchable. Some leaders delivered speeches with regard to the evil face of society and published writings on these issues. On 27th January, 1919, Ambedkar explained the state of slavery of untouchables before the Southborough Committee. The untouchables were prohibited from using the public road and if some high caste man happens to cross him, he has to be out of the way and stand at such a distance that his shadow will not fall on the high caste man. The untouchables were not even considered citizens. It was there despair condition that made the untouchables the slaves of Hindu society. Ambedkar played a crucial role in giving reservation in the services to the scheduled castes and tribes. In article 355 of the Indian constitution, a general direction to the union and state governments is given for special considerations to the SC and ST(S) in the government services.

Ambedkar during the Round Table Conference made the provision for central and state governments, to have a special department to look after the interests of backward communities. The Round Table Conference (1930) was organized by the British to have opinions from the representative of various groups for framing a new constitution of India. Ambedkar, was also invited by the British in this meeting. Ambedkar asserted that this Conference held a great potential for the untouchable of India. It gave them, for the first time in the history of India, the right to decide their own future apart from the Hindu majority. In 1931 when the second session held,

Gandhi and the congress boycotted the first session because the government had refused to grant India, the Dominion Status. In the near future a debate took place over the representatives or spokespersons of untouchables. Ambedkar got dissatisfied when Mahatma Gandhi insisted that only he would speak on the behalf of the untouchable and he claimed this opportunity because he had spent time among untouchables and he had a public identification with their problems. Ambedkar found Gandhi unfit as a leader for the cause of untouchables during the Conference because his ideas were not radical for the eradication of untouchability as he was not ready to depart from the very traditional institution of Hinduism, which was responsible for the oppression of marginalised castes. Ambedkar's feelings for the untouchables are visible in his views on the depressed classes:

The Depressed Classes are not anxious, they are not clamorous, they have not started any movement for claiming that there shall be an immediate transfer of power from the British to the Indian people... but if the British Government is unable to resist the forces that have been set up in the country which do clamour for transference of political power—and we know the Depressed Classes in their present circumstances are not in a position to resist that – then our submission is that if you make that transfer, the transfer will be accompanied by such conditions and by such provisions that the power shall not fall into the hands of a clique, into the hands of an oligarchy, or into the hands of a group of people, whether Muhammadans or Hindus; but that the solution shall be such that the power shall be shared by all communities in their respective proportions. (Ambedkar 66)

In the first half of 1930s, the British government decided to allot separate electorates for the untouchable but it was opposed by Gandhi because he believed that this separation would provide them perpetual bondage. Gandhi also said that untouchables should not be considered separate from Hindu majority:

My intimate acquaintance with every shade of untouchability convince me that their lives, such as they are, are so intimately mixed with those of the caste Hindus in whose midst and for whom they live, that it is impossible to separate them. They are part of an invisible family.
(Gandhi 293)

There are some critics who believe that Gandhi had faith in the caste hierarchy and he opposed the decision of separate electorate to reduce the threats to Hinduism. But it is quite clear that Gandhi and Ambedkar both stimulated a lot to reduce the problems of caste based division in Indian society. The difference between Gandhi and Ambedkar was that Gandhi took untouchability as a religious issue while Ambedkar considered it a political one. So Ambedkar said to untouchables at Nagpur Conference, “Nobody can remove your grievances as well as you cannot remove them unless you get political power in your hands” (Nath 255).

The main objective of Ambedkar was to make the untouchable aware about their political rights and to reserve power for this community. When the government announced for separate electorates he supported it hugely.

2.6 The Theory of Dalit Liberation: If we trace the scene of Dalit Liberation in Indian politics we see that the Ambedkar’s ideas are as influential as the ideas of Marxism and can call it the influence of Ambedkarism. Ambedkarism defines the

ideology of the Dalit movement which is an anti-caste movement. Like in Marxism, a class struggle urged to abolish the social and economic exploitation of proletariats by bourgeoisies, Ambedkarism intended to abolish the social, economic and political exploitation of Dalits by the upper castes especially Brahmins and capitalists. Ambedkar never remained consistent on his idea and his idea did never completely resolve the problems he encountered. But there are few points which highlight the scene of Dalit Liberation:

- a) A concern with the needs of the Dalits which require a total destruction of the caste system and the Brahminical superiority.
- b) A strong dedication for a country, whose historical and cultural interpretations are free from the compulsions of the so-called 'Hindu' identity.
- c) A firm belief that the eradication of caste problem required a negation of 'Hinduism' as a religion, and adoption of a different religion, like Buddhism. Ambedkar considered Buddhism best not only for the masses of Dalits but for all the Indians as well.
- d) A wide socialism defined as state socialism or to some extent democratic socialism which grew out of Ambedkar's democratic liberalism and liberal dedication to individual rights
- e) A valuable rationalism which attacks on the vicious superstitions of Hinduism and interprets Buddhism rationally, and
- f) Ambedkar gave an alternative political platform to the Indian Congress party, which connected a determined independent Dalit movement with a

continuously attempted coalition of economically and socially exploited Dalits and Shudras.

In the 1930s, the major writings of Ambedkar focussed mainly on the leadership problem of Dalits. Ambedkar's major important ideas were formed during these periods but his writings appeared in 1940s and 1950s, when he was serving as Labour Minister and the general spokesman for the untouchables. During 1930s he wanted to establish a political embodiment of the general ideology of left for the destruction of caste system. But the ten-year plan came to an end. The time of 1940s was a decade of Congress hegemony which was established to fight for the independence of India and it covered all other issues.

We can observe that in most of the countries, the ruling community comprises a wealthy minority, who has got all the privileges. In every society a minority of individuals have privileged access to wealth, education and social status, and hence to the state power. If this process could be imaginatively combined with certain special welfare strategies for sharing political power and distributional criteria for sharing wealth in favour of the marginalised groups, the system may function relatively well. On the other hand we see a system where all these ideas are absent and, the process of inclusion and exclusion is rooted at the primary level in relation to this we see that the caste system in Indian society obstructs the smooth functioning of Indian administration.

2.7 Objectives of Dalit Theory: The birth of Dalit movement in a way is the birth of awareness among Dalits, which can be termed as, 'Dalit Consciousness'. Dalit consciousness is a mental state of people that always believes in throwing away the

rules of exploitation and marginalization. It may be in the sense of economical inequality, social inequality, or cultural inequality in the society. Dalit consciousness does not accept someone as superior than others. It does not believe in the rule concept of all in all but for all, by all and of all. Educated Dalits and intellectuals talk about the problems of poor and about exploitation and humiliations from the upper castes without any hesitation. Educated Dalits try to explain to the other illiterate brothers about the required reformation in the society. Dalit Movement has given rise to the birth of many writers and journalists and a lot of awareness. Many writers and journalists through their writing made the people aware about the exploitation and marginalization carried on them. These writers and journalists are inspired by the consciousness of the Dalit community. Due to this new consciousness about the ideas of Ambedkar a new group of thinkers emerged among Dalit community. Thousands of students, lawyers, peasants, workers, officers, writers, and people of all occupations joined the Dalit movement to fight against the age old caste compulsion put on them. The leaders of the Dalit movement argued that our political leaders who were elected from reserved constituencies were unable to avoid the political marginalization of Dalits.

If we talk about the emancipation of Dalits, it is like an internal process. It involves a process of liberation of the self from the old internalized prejudices. But the model for emancipation is set by the upper castes themselves. For many Dalits, emancipation is like an adoption of mainstream behaviour. Confirmation of emancipation through assimilation comes when honours are bestowed upon a Dalit by members of upper castes themselves. This is true all over India when a Dalit is elected or nominated for the post of high order or rank.

The ultimate objective in this process is dissolution of the 'dalitness' or 'marginalization'. To liberate oneself from the traditional bonds and enter a free labour market is actually the first step. To speak and wear clothes as others do, to have access to what they enjoy, whether in the village space, in the sphere of power, in the professions, or in the religious world. These objectives may be helpful in improving their lives and more helpful in breaking the old discrimination barriers that bar Dalits from participating in mainstream power. This may be the model of successful emancipation, which believes in the integration of marginalized communities in the mainstream society.

2.8 Emergence of Dalit Literature in India: With emergence of Dalit consciousness in all aspects of society, there was also an emergence of the same mindset in the field of literature. If we are talking about the Dalit movement, we cannot forget its contribution in the field of Indian literature including the major writings in Indian languages like Kannada, Telugu, Marathi, Gujarati and Hindi. The term 'Dalit literature', which was first used in 1958, at the Dalit conference held in Bombay is like an identity marker for the marginalized community and it came into prominence in 1972, when a group of young Marathi writers-activists founded an organization called 'Dalit panthers'. The name expressed their intellectual relationship and solidarity with Black Panthers who were engaged in a literary struggle for African-American rights in the American. It emerged out of friction in religion, political, economical and social fields. Dangle, a Marathi Dalit writer and the thinker believed that the Dalit literature is not a literature of a particular caste or a literature of revenge. It does not spread hatred but it is associated with Dalit movement to bring change and reformation. But what does Dalit literature mean? Is it a literature written by Dalits on

their own lives or it includes the literature written by non Dalits on Dalits? These questions lead to a very brilliant discussion. But it is very difficult to draw a boundary line in between these two claims. Dalit literature refers to the writings of Dalits on marginalization. As Sharankumar Limbale clearly spells out the definition and function of Dalit literature thus:

By Dalit literature, I mean writing about Dalits by Dalit writers with a Dalit consciousness. The form of Dalit literature is inherent in its Dalitness, and its purpose is obvious; to inform Dalit society of its slavery, and narrate its pain and suffering to upper caste Hindus.
(*"Maulana Azad Journal of the English Language"* 81)

The Dalit writers argued that the experiences and the humiliation undergone by Dalits cannot be imagined or explained by non-Dalit writers. In this discussion many writers from both Dalit and non-Dalit communities participated. Non-Dalits, who wrote about Dalit lives were identified as less rebellious because they did not suffer untouchability. Nevertheless, they expressed their anger against the injustice of the society their ideas were more concerned with economic inequality. But the prime concern of Dalit writers is related with social injustice.

A Dalit writer is the one who writes with the experience of his community, the pain of his past burden in his bones, who subverts mainstream cultural history, revitalizes the denigrated spheres of language and creates an alternate vision of future. Inspired by Ambedkar's philosophy, he seeks to raise the consciousness of the Dalits, by recovering their self-respect and challenging the traditional Hindu Value and institutional structures. The traditional aesthetics

invested with the concepts of pleasure and beauty are found expressly inadequate to judge Dalit literature. (Jayaprada, *Maulana Azad Journal of the English Language* 84)

Therefore, the Dalit writers considered their own writings as Dalit literature and they concluded the writings of non-Dalits on Dalits as protest literature. This conclusion of few Dalit writers has made a negative impact on the non-Dalit literature. If more works to come out by non-Dalits on Dalits, it might contribute in making Dalit literature more fascinating. Arjun Dangle, a writer and leader of the Dalit panther movement believes that 'Dalit is not a caste but a realization and is related to the experiences, joys and sorrows and struggles of those belonging the lowest strata of society'. According to Hemalatha K:

Dalit literature is a protest against all forms of exploitation based on class, race, caste or occupation. The dalit poets of Maharashtra, Gujrat and Andhra have drawn freely on regional forms, rural dialects and tribal languages, thus giving their poetry an intensely native idiom. Since dalit literature is closely associated with the hopes for freedom of a group of people, it is marked by revolt and negativism of untouchables who are victims of social, economic and cultural inequality. They rejected all role models, traditional literature, Eastern and Western critical theories and decided to create a literature of their own, an identity of their own. (*The Vedic Path* 29)

Dalit writers have developed the concepts of Dalit literary theory, a set of ideas within which Dalit writing should be read and analysed. Dalit literature

according to some critics is a propaganda literature because it is written to bring about social understanding and experience and it is articulated in a collective form. It also carries some amount of anger which is a result of the torments of Dalit life. Therefore, it was Dalit movement which compelled everyone in the society to look at the last man standing in the social hierarchy of the caste system. Before Dalit literature, the literature which existed earlier, concentrated only on one class of people and it gave lesser importance for the subjects concerning the Dalits. A number of writers in the history had written about the lords and noble men and their histories. These writing were the result of opportunism or to get benefits from the powerful lords by praising them. All those histories are questionable in the present time. They never talked about the common people and marginalized communities, who work from morning till evening. One can find hardly any work that talks about the common man. There are not enough poems about the common soldier, who dies during the wars which kings waged against their neighbours without caring for the lives of common soldiers. There are not many works which were written on these subjects in the past days. One never gets the description of women whose husbands died in the war fields and about their condition. It happened because the situation or the atmosphere which existed in those days restricted the writers to write on few subjects. The literature that does not deal with common subjects should be regarded as a partial literature. Therefore, Dalit literature focuses on the common human subjects. Dalit literature has a richness and variety, which can be observed through the writings of contemporary writers.

Ambedkar's Untouchable movement, which first began with the urban Mahars, influenced the position of Untouchables all over India. The Government of India Act of 1935, confirmed special educational programs and the reservation of

government posts for the untouchables. It was also due to this movement that a new literature emerged which can be analysed in at three levels: This literature falls into three categories:

- 1) Political essays and treatises
- 2) A sophisticated literature in form of novels, poetry, and short stories, known by the term 'Dalit literature' and
- 3) Folk songs

This literature was an emerging literature and has proclaimed a huge voice of protest. The description of pain is visible in Dalit stories, told in Marathi, Tamil, Hindi and Kannada and Telugu. And these stories are now being translated into English, French and Spanish. Dalit literature serves the purpose of Social intervention and carries strong rebellious notions. The nature of theses notions varies depending upon the writer's personality, objectives and inspiration to write the changing socio-cultural contexts. It is crucial for a good understanding of Dalit lives to keep in mind the historical, social and cultural setting to which they belong. In the Dalit writings the subject is an individual among many who shares the same types of cultural alienation, physical repression and social stigma, the consequence is that these persons are kept out of the legitimate boundaries of human society. The inner quest for identity, condemnation of the traditional Hindu practices and the social struggles to assert one's human dignity take various forms according to the will, vision and capacity of the writer. One of the main features of Dalit literature is the protest and rejection of Brahminism. Nevertheless, it is not against the Brahmins. The 'Brahminism' is a mental state which accepts the hegemonic tendencies in a society.

It sets inferiority in the mind of another person in the hierarchy of caste system. It provides more respect and more benefit for the caste which is up in the ladder of caste system, and as it goes down the ladder benefit and respect also decreases. The Dalit caste, which is the lowest of all the castes, has experienced exploitation, jeering, mockery, and slavery. This notion of Brahminism is not only exercised by Brahmins but also by the Sudras, who simply copy the ideas of Brahminical practices without knowing their nature and behaviour. Dalit literature has originated from the pain and mind of Dalits. At the initial stage the nature and quality may be different like flames which can be seen in the early stage of the expulsion of lava from a vent in the earth. But after a certain period of time when lava gets calm, it provides precious materials from earth's womb. Similarly here also after the purgation of anger the finest quality of work and craft of language is possible in Dalit literature. In the field of Dalit literature, Kannada literature has its own significance, though it is less in comparison to Marathi literature. It has clearly represented the problems of Dalits to its readers. It represents the Dalit world, which Dalits had been tolerating since histories.

The Dalit writers no longer look for sympathy of non Dalits. They tell the world their own story, in their own way. Dalits are developing with the help of globalization, with the help of computer and internet; they are ready to establish their relationships with the Afro-American and African writers. The pain described in Dalit writings is visible in the world literature through translation. In fact Dalit writing seems to be getting on the list of every major publisher in India. The features of the Dalit literature are similar to the other marginalized literature of the world like African literature. Dalit literature is slowly emerging as a discipline of academic study as well. The Department of English at the University of Pune, is running a course by

the name 'Literature of protest', which focuses on the study of Dalit and Afro-American writings.

2.9 Dalit Consciousness in Indian Literature: Hindi is the official language of India and in Indian literature the significance of Hindi language is countable because of a larger reading community. We can discuss some famous Hindi writers, who have brilliantly written on the problems of Dalits. Muktibodh, the celebrated poet of Hindi language supported the cause of 'Dalit' and their emancipation with a committed urge in his writings. The 'chhayavad' tradition or the period of romanticism in Hindi was developed under the influence of English romantic poets Keats, Shelley and Wordsworth. This period influenced poets like Sumitranandan Pant, Nirala, Mahadevi Verma and many others. Muktibodh was like a rebellious poet who led the path of radicalism in poetry. In 1936, under the influence of October revolution of U.S.S.R, All India Progressive Writers' Association was established. It had its first conference in the same year chaired by Premchand, prominent Hindi fiction writer. In the post-independent India, many literary activities came into existence including the development of Dalit aesthetics in literature. There are poets like Dhumil, Kedarnath Singh, Rajkamal Choudhary, Sarveshwar Dayal Saxena, Srikant Verma, Mangalesh Dabral, Prabhat Tripathy, Arun Kamal and many others became colourful in their poetic utterances. They were sympathetic towards the cause of the oppressed and accordingly improved their creativity more with a spirit needed for a true voice of protest. In Dalit poetry there is a voice of protest and a demanding of human rights. The Dalits are burning with a desire for revenge. Their anger is reflected in "You Wrote From Los Angeles", by Daya Pawar:

How did we ever get to this place?

This land which was never mother to us?
 Which never gave us even the life of cats and dogs?
 I hold their unpardonable sins as witness
 And turn here and now.
 A rebel
 I'm the sea: I sour, I surge.
 I move out to build your tombs.
 The winds, storms, sky, earth. (*The Vedic Path* 40)

'Sadgati', a story by Premchand gave a heart rending account of the miserable condition of a landless cobbler who was left to extreme physical labour by his landlord in empty stomach that led to his ultimate death. His wife, with cooked food did wait his arrival to home from the field unknowingly but in lost mood. The brilliant portrayal of a rural scene by a master craftsman like Premchand is a character certificate to the creativity of his observations and love for the marginalized. The writings of non-Dalit writers show sympathy towards the marginalized communities but there is a clear absence of rebellious spirit. Hence, it can't be treated as literature for the Dalit because it lacks revolutionary spirit of Dalit consciousness. Dhumil, in his poem 'Mochiram' delineated the miserable life of a cobbler skinning a dead cow to serve as a tanner and suffering the humiliation of an undignified profession. Kunwar Narayan is another poet who spoke for the oppressed and marginalized. He has seriously gone through the pages of history and holds the key to the reminiscences of his country that had not survived the ruins of feudalism.

Malayalam language enjoys a significant status among the languages in Kerala. Many literary writers in Kerala often join together to think on the social issues

and make decision for organising literary activities in favour of marginalized voices. Explaining, the freedom of expression, voice against humiliation, subjugation, implementation of social justice forms the mainstream of modern Malayalam literature. There are writers like Basheer and Varkey, who carry the tradition of realist writings highlighting the principle vision for a judicious creative impulse. If literature unites its value among the marginalised classes, the members of these classes automatically participate in it as readers or writers. This demarcation is only possible when a writer separates him from the escapist literature and runs after the cause of Dalitism. There are Poets like Olappamanna and Akkitham, who have their origins from Namboodiri Brahmins but they have criticised the ways of their own caste.

The Indian society is still being governed on the guidelines by upper caste Hindus, and the mindset of the society is being affected by the motives of the powerful class. Glifford Bob says in the 'introduction' of the book *Dalit Rights are Human Rights* that:

In rural India, where the bulk of India's population continues to live, Dalits are excluded from village wells, temples, and teashops, forced to subordinate themselves before upper caste neighbors, discriminated against in land and housing allocation, and prevented from participating in local government institutions. Throughout India, Dalits continue to occupy the lowest rungs of the economic system, often living in dire poverty. (9)

The Dalits have been restricted entry to upper-caste surroundings. Even if they are allowed, they have to keep pots hanging from their necks lest they defile the soil

through their spitting. They fasten brooms around their waists in order that the upper lanes are purged off their footprints. They are separated from others on the basis of their life style. There are very few writers, who use their pens to write on such themes happening on the temple premises in any Indian village. Mohan Parmar and Harish Mangalam have edited the first short story anthology in Gujarati *Gujarati Dalit Varta* (1987) that talks about the predicament of Dalitism. There are journals like *Samajmitra*, *Hayati* and *Sarvanam*, which have affected the social consciousness without any valid support from the mainstream literary establishment and their leaders like Patel and Darbar. The painful sketch of their life is well presented in the stories of Dashrath Parmar's 'Paat', Madhukant Kalpits 'Kulkatha' and Barish Mangalam's 'Dayan'. Pravin Darji's 'Maara Gaam Vachare', Joseph Macwan's 'Rotio Najrai Gay', Dalpat Chauhan's 'Badlo' are really countable in this line to authenticate history at any point of time.

In the Dalit writings, there is a sharp attack on Brahmanical cult that is instrumental in excluding Dalits from any scholarly participation in social life. It was obvious that Dalits suffered rejection and refusal both resulting in the futile flights in the air of subjugation. In 1972 the emergence of Dalit Panthers paved way for the thoughts of Arjun Dangle, J.V Pawar and Namdeo Dhasal. The oral tradition of the history of subaltern living so far at parallel with Vedas and other Sanskrit texts started gaining ground slowly. It added a solid stimulating force to the cause of protest thereby dawning a new phase in the combative outlook of this marginalized class.

Tamil Dalit writings call forth a rise of compassion since 8th century. Sundarmurti Nayanar, the famous poet of this era created three characters that embellish the pride of this society. Nandan, an untouchable supplying stretching

leather of the temple drum, Kannappan, an untouchable archer spitting on the holy lingam to bathe it and offering tasting fruit to the lord to find its quality and Thiruneela Kanta Yazhpahar, a Veena player of low birth, not being permitted for an entry into the temple formed the subject matter of his creativity. During 10th century, such thematic idealism became powerful in the poetical work titled as, Thiruthondar Thiruvandadi of Nambi Andar Nambi. However, the voices of Dalit added vigour and enthusiasm to Peria Puranam by Sekhizhar, in which the lamentable woes of saints found a mighty echo and eventually Lord Shiva became their rescuer. Nandan stood as the symbol of purity endowed with the grace of a Brahmin and nowadays it is the ultimate weapon of many politicians to talk of social purgation. As such, Nandan symbolises the flame of tongue to devour Brahmanism even in modern times. It is at its most vibrant to talk of caste struggle.

2.10 Dalit Consciousness and Mulk Raj Anand: Mulk Raj Anand is one of those great novelists who helped in the formation of Dalit consciousness through his novels like *Untouchable*, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*. Anand started writing *Untouchable* in 1928 and it was published in 1935. He got stimulation to write this novel from the ruthless suppression of Dalit lives. *Untouchable* was revised and indianized during Anand's stay at Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram. Anand shows how the untouchable lived in inhuman conditions and were marginalized in the Indian social sphere. The two novels of Mulk Raj Anand *Untouchable* and *Coolie* deal with characters, who are subjected to worst kinds of humiliation, sometimes for trivial reasons and sometimes without any Cause whatsoever. But though the novel begins as a note of despair, it ends on a note of hope, with echoes from Shelley's 'Ode to the west wind' and 'Euganean Hills'.

Mulk Raj Anand has always focused on the eradication of social stains like casteism, untouchability, inequality and marginalization based on age old traditions. He believed that man should be known by his worth and not by birth. The social blots have troubled the Indian society throughout history. Anand has a deep feeling of sympathy for the depressed, their plight and predicament and calls them truly heroic. He makes use of art to fulfil his social dreams. On one hand he exposes the economic inequality among the Indian people and on the other criticises the age-old inhuman, base traditions which rendered these unfortunate sections of the society equal to the savage. This kind of hard criticism is visible both in his novels and short stories as well.

In England, Anand found no such thing as untouchability as he had encountered in India. He has recorded one instance in *Seven Summers* which had made a profound impact on his thinking. The hero of the novel *Untouchable* was a sweeper boy, Bakha. Anand was very friendly with him and admired him in a number of ways. One incident that had happened when he was growing up may be recalled here. Once a sweeper boy took care of Anand in every way and took him home, when he was injured at play. Anand's mother, instead of thanking the sweeper boy who took care of her son, rebuked the sweeper boy for having physically touched him and made him impure. Anand was confused by what he saw. What the sweeper boy had done was a normal human thing and he had no intention of doing anything which would undermine or outrage any one's belief in Hinduism. As a matter of fact, the sweeper boy was also a Hindu but actually he was an untouchable! This was the incident that profoundly perturbed Anand and it was difficult for him to accept. When he was in England, he saw something very different. In England there was no social

demarcation between those who were touchable and those who were untouchable. A human being was simply a living subject and nothing else. This mindset of Indian society in which he had grown up troubled him a lot. According to Anand, the social system of England was normal with regard to the issue of marginalization. In India, the social pattern was quite disturbing for Anand and he wanted to see a different kind of society in India.

When Anand attained maturity as an adult, he started identifying himself with the marginalized and the underprivileged class. He took his inspiration from Gandhi, who was like an innovator in Hindu society. He had never been an immature child, even as a child his experiences convinced him to write something about the marginalized class. There was an incidental story in Gandhi's weekly newspaper, *Harijan*, about a young untouchable boy which excited Anand's imagination. When he got influence by the story, he wrote a letter to Gandhi asking for a meeting with him. Gandhi replied in a very positive manner. During these days, Anand was also busy in writing something on the issue of the equality of all human beings.

Let us talk about Anand's attitude towards the untouchable, which is clearly visible in his novels like *Untouchable*. The novel talks about and highlights the marginalised existence of a sweeper boy named Bakha and his tormented routine life. Bakha has three options open to him, in order to escape the problem of marginalization. The first option is that one should listen to the words of a missionary who wanted to convert him to Christianity. This might relieve his situation to some extent but would not solve the problem. The second option is that one should live by the words of Gandhi, who told his countrymen that to demarcate anyone as a marginalized was not the right thing to do. All human beings are pure and impure in

the same ratio and one should not look down upon any of them. According to the third option there is an urge to adopt a new western technology, which can wash out the human refuse and execute the task of a sweeper. The third option seems good to Anand.

Anand is like a reformer. He believes in reforming the Indian society because it is one of his objectives. He affects his readers' satisfaction to stir them out of traditional attitudes, and stimulate them to make a fresh approach to experience. In the novel *Untouchable*, we ascertain a progressive and revolutionary attitude of a humanist, who is sympathetic towards the working class and marginalized communities. Anand is a realist and his social realism has the tint of Marxism in it. He communicates with his readers, takes them in confidence and makes a sensible relationship with them. He delineates his characters and gives a lively presentation before the readers. Anand is concerned with the problems of his present. He keeps himself away from the traditional customs and orthodox setting. In fact, his novels present emotional truths and social realities. His style of handling the fiction can be best identified through his analyses of social problems and of corrupt practices, which are beautifully conveyed in *Coolie*, *Untouchable* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*. He makes a brilliant fusion of experience and architectonic skills. He indirectly refers to the cosmic vision with objective truth in *Coolie*, which is a masterpiece of epic extent and magnificence. In Anand's writings there is a brilliant compromise between the social reality and its literary presentation. He is like Premchand a sensuous novelist with a passion for reformation. He criticises life for giving space to the existence of social injustice and moral downfall. He attacks on the social norms that disrupt the

idea of cooperation and brotherhood and facilitates the growth of inequality and tyranny possible through caste and class divisions.

Anand is one of worlds' best writers, who have raised the issue of marginalization. He, like Charles Dickens, has upraised the problems of the society. There are very few English writers, including the Indian novelists, who devoted their words and feelings to the poor masses, outcastes and the neglected sections of the society. The novels of Mulk Raj Anand are the representative works of morality in the first half of twentieth century and his writings revolt against the immoral patterns of Indian society. He delineates the sketches of those elements of human nature which invites the common feelings of the readers as tears, anger, joy, sorrow, pity, sympathy and compassion.

In his novels Anand talks about the evil of untouchability, exploitation, child labour, social norms, customs, beliefs, prejudices and the problems of the marginalized communities. His writings result from a serious study of rural and urban setting, where hunger and starvation are caused by the working of natural forces. His novels give a detailed account of untouchability, exploitation, poverty, hunger and sufferings of marginalized community. The theme of suffering caused by the immoral situations in life has been beautifully depicted. The heroic effort of the main characters and rebellion against the heavy odds raises the novels to the lofty heights of an epic. Through his realistic, sensitive and compassionate characters, Mulk Raj Anand presents his penetrating thoughts and rebellious attitude in understanding the harsh realities of the social life in India. Anand has written revolutionary novels, which deals with outcastes as the chief protagonists. His heroes present all untouchables in India and their common day problems in real life. He wants to

remove the evil of caste system and wants to create in readers an urgent awareness of the immoral social evil and to stimulate the common thinking for the removal of these social evils in order that a desirable or a just social order may come into being.

Mulk Raj Anand's writings present him as a messiah of the marginalized community. His brilliant works describe down-trodden and poor India's social, political, and cultural conditions. His novels communicate the abuses of an exploited class like the untouchable boy Munoo in *Coolie*. *Untouchable* and *Coolie* are the only novels in which Anand has presented the realistic picture especially problems and exploitations of teenagers of the early decades of 20th century in India to reveal the social background with the unique observation of social reformer. Anand has not presented the teenage character in particularly but in a general way. The writer has not only delineated his works with the idea of presenting his literary pieces morally to the Indian society but also made it compulsory to think about the masses, about the sufferings and abused people. Anand's protagonists Bakha and Munoo in both the Novels sail in the same boat as their personal and subjective suffering and exploitation is concerned. There is a parallel central theme in *Untouchable* and *Coolie*—social exploitation, exploitation of the poor and the under-privileged class by the forces of capitalism, industrialism and colonialism. In Anand's *Coolie*, Munoo is denied his fundamental rights to life and happiness and is exploited and made to suffer, till he dies of consumption. The novelist makes it quite clear that Munoo is not the only victim of caste based exploitation; in fact, his life represents the lives of many Munnoos who have been residing under such exploited conditions.

2.11 Summing up: Untouchability is an evil in Indian society and it disturbs the real sense of humanity. In this chapter there is an account of the philosophical and

historical development of Dalit consciousness. The political and social decisions of Ambedkar and M. Gandhi started a long debate on the issues of conversion to Christianity, constitutional rights and upliftment of marginalized communities. But the contribution of Indian Dalit literature is really marvellous in developing a reformative mindset.

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Chapter –3

**THE MAKING OF A WRITER AND A
REFORMER: SURVEY OF MULK
RAJ ANAND'S OEUVRE**

Chapter – 3

THE MAKING OF A WRITER AND A REFORMER: SURVEY OF MULK RAJ ANAND'S OEUVRE

3.0 Introductory: Mulk Raj Anand, like R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao, has made valuable contributions in the carnival of Indian English novels. He experimented with various techniques and innovations in writing novels and created a column of rich and valuable literature. Anand was an expert in the Joycean art of the 'stream of consciousness', which can be seen in his *Untouchable* and gave an inspiration to the other younger novelists of his time. Anand's *Coolie* is an example of the picaresque novel in Indian writing. He has brilliantly utilised the technique of 'interior monologue' at situations, where he is interested in revealing the subconscious and innermost movements of characters. While he is inspired a lot by his Western education and his readings in Western philosophical systems including the Marxist philosophy, it should be kept in mind that he has always been committed to and interested in depicting the social, political, cultural and other realities of India. In some of his prime inspirations were the most attractive ideals of Gandhism or Gandhian movement that remained Anand's passion for many years. This was like a corner stone in the inspiring world of Mulk Raj Anand.

3.1 An Outline of Anand's Life: Mulk Raj Anand was born on December 12, 1905 in Peshawar, which is now in Pakistan. His father was a coppersmith, and later promoted to the position of a Head Clerk in Dogra Regiment of the British Army. His mother belonged to a peasant family. His parents had four children and the novelist was the third one among them. Anand had been interested in the idea of short story since his childhood days, when his mother used to tell him the stories of ancient

Indian folk and legends. He was very much impressed by an old classical short story, *The Adventures of Raja Rasalu*, which had all the characteristics of a good story and this impression was so utmost that later he inverted his early youth in writing his own short stories.

Anand was also interested in travelling and since his early childhood, he used to make regular visits to the religious places with his mother on holidays. Nevertheless, he did never give much concern to the religious spirit. The religion, as was defined by the temple priests, appeared to him simply ritualistic and was unable to hold him for long. The life of Anand and his career has been divided into three parts by scholars and critics:

- a. The early years in India, 1905-1925
- b. The years abroad, 1925-1945
- c. The later remaining years from 1946 to the end of his life. (Cawasjee 1)

This categorisation is based on the writer's development as a literary genius and a man committed with social mission and responsibility. In the first period we find the formation of his mind and the influences that honed his writings. In the second, we see his hard struggle to become a novelist, and the later success that projected him to be considered as 'the foremost Indian novelist'. In the third and the last period we experience some kind of disappointment. His fictions, apart from *Private Life of Indian Prince*, *The Road*, *Gauri* and two other sensitive autobiographical novels; *Seven Summers* and *Morning Face*, could not sustain the earlier level of success. Nevertheless, this last period is famous for his responsible attitude towards Indian social and cultural life. In this last phase of his life, he

founded and edited the art magazine '*Marg*'. Anand got admission in Khalsa College, Amritsar, and in the University of Punjab in 1921, which awarded him the degree of a graduate with honours in 1924. Then, he moved to Cambridge to study further in higher studies and at London he received his PhD. in 1929. He continued with his studies, started participating in academic conferences and delivered lectures at League of Nations School of Intellectual Cooperation in Geneva. He delivered various lectures between 1932 and 1945, at 'Works Educational Association' in London.

The period of 1930s and 1940s, the development of Anand is divided into two categories:

- a. Literary London, and
- b. Gandhi's India, joining the struggle for freedom.

The influence of those two categories is meticulously discernable in his writings. He participated in the Spanish Civil War, with the Republicans. During the World War II, he became a broadcaster and scriptwriter in the film division of the British Broadcasting Corporation, London. After having some active experience at BBC, London, Anand permanently, came back to India and settled in his hometown, Khandala, which is about eighty miles far from Bombay. After his settlement, this place became his centre of activity. In 1946, he founded the arts magazine '*Marg*' and became the director of Kutub Publishers. From 1948 to 1966, Anand devoted his life for academic services, professing at Indian universities. In the 1960s he was Tagore Professor of Literature and Fine Art at the University of Punjab and visiting professor at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Shimla (1967-68). From 1965 to 1970 he remained Fine Arts Chairman at 'Lalit Kala Akademi' (National Academy of Arts). In

1970, he was the president of 'Lokayata Trust', a community and cultural centre in the village of Hauz Khas, New Delhi.

During the last days of his life, when he was ill and in sorrow because of the death of Miss Dolly, his sometime assistant; and when all literary figures were waiting for the celebration of the great novelist's hundredth birthday on 12 December, 2004, he passed away to his heavenly place on 28 September, 2004.

Anand put in his novels the intellectual stimulation, which he gained from his short stay in England in the Nineteen-thirties and from his continuous fulfilment of self-knowledge in the journey of life. It is this ability which gives power to Anand's creations; the richness of variety and his visionary experiences is available throughout all his narratives. And this was his achievement from the first novel *Untouchable* (1935) to *Private Life of an Indian Prince* (1953).

3.2 Marked by the Spell of Gandhism: When Anand was in School, he came in contact with the Gandhian thoughts. As a student in Khalsa College, Amritsar, he assumed the position of an active nationalist, participating in Gandhi's Non-Cooperative Movement. Anand was interested in Gandhi's life-long fight against colonial exploitation of the weaker nations and in the non-violent condemnation of any form of economic exploitation and in the idea of respect and dignity for all humans, the noble and the lowly, the high castes and the lowest of Indian society, the untouchables. Anand's heroes seem genuinely inspired by Gandhian ideals:

The love and warmth that emanated from Gandhi found its way into the hero's personality; the charity and forgiveness that Gandhi preached taught Anand to temper his hatred against the caste Hindu oppressors. (Cawasjee 42)

Anand gave his full acceptance for the notions of Gandhian thought and made an agreement to follow the path of Gandhi in his struggle for the improvement of untouchables and weaker sections of pre-independent Indian society. Anand himself asserts this fact in his essay 'Why I Write?':

I could not have written all the twenty or so novels, and hundreds of short stories, if I had not been possessed with the sources of love which Gandhi touched off in me, and if I had not had the deep inner desire to reveal the beauty, the terror and the tenderness in the lives of my characters. (*Indo-English* 15)

Gandhi's philosophy of 'harijan' was also admired by Anand during his three-month stay at the Sabarmati Ashram, in 1929. This influence of Gandhism has been discussed in the book entitled, *The Lasting Legacies of Mulk Raj Anand: A Tribute*, in such a manner:

Anand was profoundly influenced by Gandhian philosophy and visited the Mahatma frequently. As the story goes, he came one day to Gandhi's ashram dressed like a typical Englishman in corduroys, silk tie and suede shoes carrying a draft of his manuscript. Gandhi advised him to stop 'dressing like a monkey' (i.e. like an indiscriminating mimic of the West, not able to understand the demands of the Indian climate conditions) and not let "[his] untouchables sound too much like Bloomsbury intellectuals... [for instance] an untouchable boy wouldn't talk in those long sentences." Anand took Gandhi's correction to heart and rewrote the entire novel. (Khan 60)

Anand was moved by the genuineness of Gandhi's love for the outcastes more importantly than any of his other ideas and he mentioned this in his article, 'The Story of My Experiment with a White Lie' that "the genuineness of his Gandhi's love for the outcastes moved me more importantly than many of his other ideas" (Anand, *Post-Modern Agony* 155). Anand also learnt simplicity, sincerity and self-realization at Gandhi's *Ashram* as he asserts this during an interview, conducted by Lalji Misra, answering the question on the making factors of a novel. He says:

I don't know what is a novel? I was not a novelist by choice because my philosophical questions couldn't be answered. I don't know how to tackle my philosophical questions. So I was guided by conscience as I have ultimately to confess in a novel way as I told you in my talk yesterday. Gandhi was not a novelist like James Joyce but his ideas as he speaks or lives do have a sense of life. I learnt simplicity in Gandhi's *Ashram*. I learnt sincerity and self-realisation there. (Bhatnagar, IV. 51-52)

The discussions he had with Gandhi at Ashram turned him a socialist realist. By 1932 Anand had become an accepted active member of the Marxist-oriented All-India Progressive Writers' Association and he also prepared its Manifesto. He became part of the 1930's Socialist Movement in England and Europe, and he carefully read Marx's 'Letters on India' in the New York Herald Tribune of 1853. In his earlier novels, Anand highlights the influence of Gandhi. To him, problem of being considered a polluting agent by Society, Bakha in *Untouchable* is given the consolation of Gandhi and all that he stands for. In this novel as in his later *The Sword and the Sickle*, Anand presents a personal confrontation between his hero and Gandhi;

like in *Untouchable* when Bakha is part of the crowd at a public speech delivered by M. Gandhi. He is placed at the top of a tree as he gets his first glimpse of 'the Mahatma'. Anand delineates a picture which is faithful and Gandhi's speech in *Untouchable* is carefully drawn from his Autobiography, *My Experiments with Truth*, 'Young India' and other writings.

Anand in his novels has also referred to the Gandhian ideas regarding the problem of caste system in India including that of segregation in temples, schools and wells and he has also talked about various solutions to these problems including the Gandhian solution. But Bakha cannot accept Gandhi's advices for untouchables like him, to improve their condition by giving up some evil habits. Mahatma Gandhi's words underlined in the novel by Anand are - 'Two of the strongest desires that keep me in the flesh are the emancipation of the' Untouchables and the protection of the cow', display the way Anand makes fun of Gandhi's treatment for a serious social evil with something of very less fruitful to India's fight for freedom from their present colonization and social conditions. Anand could not accept all Gandhi's doctrines because their bases were not rational, but often pitiful sentiments that Indians like Bakha, the untouchable, cannot agree with. Anand says:

As a writer I have tried to drink from the sources of love in our people, especially poor people, and to give them of my own exuberant passion, through the "burning and melting" that goes on inside me. (*Indo-English Literature* 17)

Inspired by the social requirements of Indian realities, Anand took the responsibility of providing an artistic expression to his socio-political feelings about

the Punjabi village society in which he had grown up. His struggle against the problems of the caste system, untouchability, superstitions, the superficial religious beliefs and the harsh treatment, sufferings and subjugation of women, had always been the issue of grave concern for Anand. He took up in his novels and other writings the fight for the liberation from old values, old faiths, old symbols and old sympathies. Anand asserted in his usual ebullient fashion:

“If you ask me why I write so many novels, I say it’s because I love!”
..... It is this love- not for oneself or one’s own, but for the entire mankind, transcending all constricting limitations of caste, creed, and economic or social status, and all geographical boundaries of nations, all of which are man-made that is at the root of Anand’s philosophy which animates all his activities, including his prolific writing. (*Indo-English Literature* 114)

3.3 The Colour Compassion in Anand’s Writings: Mulk Raj Anand’s writings present a clear picture of Indian society, where the problems of caste and other social divisions are omnipresent and seem inevitable. In all of his writings he shared his compassion, as humanist, throughout the narratives and revealed the actual face of social problems. Here is brief discussion on some of his writings:

Untouchable: Anand's *Untouchable* has always been a novel of universal appeal. In the novel there are scenes describing the dirt, latrines and deplorable sweeper Basti with delicate sensibility and vivid description. *Untouchable* is a novel on the problems of untouchables. It begins with the description of a colony of outcastes, consisting of:

A group of mud walled houses that clustered together in two rows under the shadow both of the town and the cantonment, but outside their boundaries and separate from them. There lived the scavengers, the leather workers, the washer man, the barbers, the water-carriers, the grass cutters and other outcasts from Hindu society. A brook ran near the lane, once with crystal clear water, now soiled by the dirt and filth of the public latrines situated about it, the odour of the hides and skins of dead carcasses left to dry on its banks, the dung of donkeys, sheep, horses, cows and buffaloes heaped up to be made into fuel cakes. The absence of a drainage system had, through the rains of various seasons, made of the quarter a marsh which gave out the most offensive smell. And altogether the ramparts of human and animal refuse that lay on the outskirts of this little colony, and the ugliness, the squalor and the misery which lay within it, made it an 'uncongenial' place to live in. (*Omnibus. Untouchable* 7)

Before the publication of *Untouchable*, Anand went to Gandhi's Ashram to show it to him. Gandhi suggested him to rewrote the whole novel and it is also said that "Gandhi himself edited the manuscript of *Untouchable*, telling Anand to make Bakha less of "a Bloomsbury intellectual" (Diana Bellonby 207). In this novel, Anand takes an account of the life of a sweeper, named Bakha, as its beginning theme to describe the colony where he lives and the problems he faces during his whole day's schedule. He suffers economically, socially, morally and psychologically. Anand also described the hypocrisy of the priest Pt. Kali Nath, when in disguise he tries to molest Bakha's sister Sohini. The novel, *Untouchable*, highlights the abuses, miseries and

sufferings of outcastes, especially of the sweeper class. In the description of various scenes in the novel the reader can easily understand the pathetic mindset of the writer. At the end of the novel Anand gave three 'prophesies' or solutions, which are related with 'the rhetoric of the Christian Missionary', 'Mahatma Gandhi's idea' and Iqbal Nath Sarshar, a poet and friend of Anand. The idea of flash system failed to present a solution for freedom to the untouchable community. It is quite clear from Anand's novel that the community of untouchables is an oppressed and exploited community and so the most disadvantaged.

Coolie: The second novel of Mulk Raj Anand, *Coolie*, also deals with the sufferings and miseries of a labour named Munoo. He is a hill boy and the protagonist of the novel, whose life begins with sufferings and ends with sufferings. At the beginning he finds trouble in the house of his uncle and aunt in a remote village of Punjab, Bilaspur, then at the place of a Sub-Accountant of a Bank in Sham Nagar. From there, he runs away and meets his benefactor Prabha and his wife in the Cat Killer's Lane in the old city of Daulatpur. Again in search of livelihood he goes to Bombay to work in a mill. In Bombay, he experiences the industrial city with unhygienic 'chawl', its disputes between the capitalists and the labourers of the Textile Mill and its loud-voiced trade union leaders. Later, he was carried out to Shimla in an injured condition by a Eurasian lady to become her rickshaw-puller. Thus, throughout this novel, Anand portrays the character of a labour Munoo and his sufferings as a universal marginalised character, as he belongs to a disadvantaged class. There is an instance from *Coolie*, where Anand depicts the plight of disadvantaged people very realistically. As the central theme of the novel is exploitation, Anand portrays two classes of distinct behaviours: the exploiter and the

exploited. Munoo is the only major character and a number of minor characters are placed around him in every phase of his life. The characters of British origin in Anand's novels can be divided into two categories. In one category there are owners of the capitalist machinery like cotton mills, tea estates and banks and in the other category there is the entire British bureaucracy. In *Coolie*, most of the British characters belong to the first category. They are shown as racist. They mark a line of demarcation among the natives. They are perfect models of the capitalist exploitation. All the whites share a common feeling with each other, which refers to the brutal exploitation of the natives. They do not want to share the same identity with the natives, because they think that they survive only through the brutal exploitation of the ignorant indigenous people. The characters like Thomas, Mr. Little and Mr. White exist for the exploitation of the natives only. They are the symbols of unsympathetic behaviour of the capitalists or colonial powers. They are not only unmindful to the problems of the natives but also passive about them. They look at the Indians as disease-ridden dirty people. In *Untouchable*, Anand talks about a gap between the high castes and the low class people. But in *Coolie*, he discusses about the widening gap between the haves and the have-nots. In the novel there exists a class conscious society, which is more complex and satanic than the caste-based society. Anand makes his protagonists his spokespersons but in *Coolie* this task has been handed over to the minor character. Munoo is a teenager and it is not possible for him to become the writer's mouthpiece. Anand puts his words in the mouth of a union leader Sauda to unfold to his views on the plight of the labourers. Anand poses some genuine problems of the poverty-stricken people through his words. He puts before the public Charter, in which the expectations of the workers from the owners of the factory are stated, he tries to show the difference between the norms and their implementations.

The Charter says that the workers are human beings and not machines. They live in and should be saved from the clutches of the moneylenders. The foreman of the cotton mills appoints all the labourers on commission. They are offered such places to live where they do not have even the basic amenities. Almost all the workers of the factory are indebted to their 'foreman', 'pathans' and 'grocers'. The workers have to pay heavy interests, which takes the maximum part of their meagre wages. Anand wants to express his pain and anger against such kind of capitalist exploitation.

Two Leaves and a Bud: Anand's another novel *Two Leaves and a Bud* is the story of poor peasants. We see the similar theme of suffering of the underprivileged and disadvantaged people, as has been discussed in *Untouchable* and *Coolie*. The protagonist of the novel, Gangu is a poor Punjabi peasant, who comes from Hoshiarpur and is taken to Macpherson Tea Estate in Assam for the plantation work. During his job at the Tea Estate, he is exploited socially, economically and morally. Finally, he becomes a victim of the colonial exploitation at the hands of the British official, who tries to rape his daughter and takes his life. Mulk Raj Anand is pure realist writer, who follows the line of humanism portrays the plight and miserable condition of the poor people of 1930s India. Saros Cowasjee talks about this novel in his book *So Many Freedoms*:

Reviewing *Two Leaves and a Bud*, the *Manchester Guardian* critic said, 'There are no serious faults of style'; the *New Statesman* commended the author on his 'grasp of the English tongue', and *The Times Literary Supplement*, that arbiter of good taste, hailed Anand as a 'veritable artist in a language which is not his own.' (96)

The main theme of the novel is related to colonial exploitation and Anand develops the story line on the idea of rulers and ruled. In the category of rulers we can see the British characters and in the category of ruled we have a list of Indian characters. Some of the rulers are driven by the desire to exploit. Most of the planters are cruel-hearted businessmen. There is a brilliant list of characters and it is quite true that Indian characters are full of life in comparison to the British persons represented in the novel. However, not a single character is developed all passionately. Most of the English characters are not deep and because of the absence of heavy psychological excellence some Indian characters are also not so beautifully delineated. When we see the British characters, they always seem conscious of their power and racial superiority. There is said to be a mutual pattern of behaviour in all the British characters throughout India. The Indian characters show certain kind of lack of polished behaviours, which is due to the inferiority complex in them. They surrender before the cunning rulers and care much for their food and livelihood. The protagonist of the novel, Gangu, represents the sorrowful life of the coolies in the time of the British colonialism. These coolies had been fighting for their existence since the early stages of British colonial rule. Gangu has also gone through the feudal exploitation by the landlords of his native place. He moves to the valley of Assam, where he bears the tortures of the colonial and capitalistic exploitation. He earns meagre wages and experiences the ill treatment. He is forced to live in unhealthy and unhygienic conditions. He is familiar with the shrewd behaviour of the 'Sahukar' because of the experience at his native village and here also he becomes a victim of same scheming. He has no substitute for certain problems. He believes in superstitions as he comes from a class of coolies and workers, who believe in irrational traditions. He thinks that his exploitation is a reward of the misdeeds of his past life. But the level exploitation

gets so extreme that he finds it unbearable and his faith starts shattering. According to some of critics, it is a tragic flaw in the character of Gangu. What actually happens, when a simple superstitious peasant suddenly deviates from the path of the god? When we read the heartfelt words of Gangu, we can analyse how the strong impact of the colonial exploitation has crushed his faith in god. Gangu is a protagonist of the novel but he does not show any kind of revolutionary attitude. He is always ready to bear the ill-treatment and to follow the line of passive exploitation. He is motivated by his values to go ahead but his life experience reminds him to surrender before the exploiters.

The story line of Anand's earlier novels like *Coolie* and of *Two Leaves and a Bud*, are almost similar in dealing with social issues. Anand has actually shifted the act of the colonial exploitation from the cotton mill in Bombay to the tea plantation in Assam, by replacing innocent child Munoo by an experienced middle aged man Gangu, by replacing the foreman of the cotton mill by the assistant planter of the tea-estate, Anand succeeds in making the point that with a slight difference in the quality and the quantity, the colonial and the capitalistic exploitation is more or less the same everywhere in India. We can compare that the problems of the coolies in the tea plantation are heavier than that in the cotton mills of the big cities. The novelist, therefore seem more aggressive and harsh while challenging the inhuman tendencies of colonialism and capitalism in *Two Leaves and a Bud*.

The Trilogy: Anand has also written a famous trilogy--*The Village* (1939), *Across the Black Waters* (1940), and *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942). These writings show a strong protest against social injustices. The story follows the life of Lahu Singh from his adolescent experiences to the experiences in World War I; his coming back

to home and involvement in some revolutionary activities. Anand's early novels reflect his concern with social and political conditions of oppression, which was a result of his growing interest in left ideology, during his days in England. *The Village* tells the life of the simple illiterate peasants of a Punjab village named Nandpur. A Sikh farmer's son Lalu Singh is the hero of *The Village* and the two succeeding novels *Across the Black Waters* and *The Sword and the Sickle*, discuss the elements of village life-landlord Sahukar and Sarkar. *Across the Black Waters* tells the life of the Indian soldiers in France and at many battlefronts. *The Sword and the Sickle* describes the life of a character named Lalu, participating in agrarian agitations in the pre-Independence India. It is clear to say that in his novels, Mulk Raj Anand has to describe the life and experiences of his heroes who are mostly village people even when they go outside their towns and areas. There are some common elements like the traditional beliefs of the Indian villagers, the power of the village Mahant and of the village moneylender over the illiterate villagers.

The Big Heart: In the novel *The Big Heart*, we experience a world of the conditions and the problems of the poor 'thathiar' community. The novel portrays realistically the capitalist exploitation of the unemployed craftsmen, who are also part of the disadvantaged section and live a life of humiliation. The starving thathiars have to accept their conditions, if they want to keep the evil eye off their doors. Anand is not so much against the setting up of machines but is very much opposed to the ownership of such means of production in the private hands of the capitalists. The novelist actually talks about the socialisation of machines as the remedy of these evils.

The Private Life of an Indian Prince (1953): This novel describes a life story of Maharaja Ashok Kumar of Shampur, which is a small hill state near the borders of

Tibet and Nepal. The Maharaja becomes neurotic, under the terrible pulls and tensions of the two women of his harm, and the problematic political conditions emerging in his state in the post-independence period. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was the home minister of the States Department at that time. The Maharaja had to decide soon and was made to sign the instrument of Accession of his state to the Indian Union. The cunningness of the foreign powers with independence, outside Indian and Pakistan is also referred in this novel. In this novel, Anand actually gives a vent to his own feeling and achieves a psychological relief from his own problematic conflict, which was going in the mind of the author itself.

The Old Woman and the Cow: This novel has been written on the life of helpless Hindu woman, another marginalised character. In her early days, she was dependent on her parents, and after marriage she became the property owned by her husband. She was ill treated or exiled by her husband for no fault of her own. In this novel the naive, submissive Gauri, after her marriage, is sold away by her mother due to financial crisis, of course, to a rich Seth. She experience a life of adventure outside and then returns quite chaste to her husband's house only to be exiled again like Sita, in the *Ramayan*, in order to avoid the chance of getting her family's name dragged in village gossip. *The Road* follows the theme of miseries and the disabilities, which is now ready to victimise marginalised individuals of an Indian village. These characters wait for the moment, when their sufferings would come to an end. They leave their villages, to be, lost in the crowd of the cities. They are yet again a section of the disadvantaged group.

The Death of a Hero: In this novel Anand uses a historical contemporary event. The scene is laid in the valley of Kashmir, where Baramula and Srinagar are

being invaded by Pakistani hordes, in order to annex Kashmir by force. In the name of protecting Islam and Muslims from the Hindu king, the houses of all inhabitants, Muslims and Hindu alike, are set on fire. Maqbool Sherwani, an ordinary worker of the Kashmir National Conference, realises the fanaticism of the invaders and dies the death of a martyr, up-holding the spirit of secularism and nationalism.

Lament on the death of a Master of Arts: This novel discusses the issue of modern education in India. A graduate or a post-graduate who spends a lot of money and a number of years over his education is looking for a white-collar job. The modern education system does not shape a youth to face the hard competition of life. Disappointment and frustration clutches him by the hand. Nur, the protagonist of the novel is a simple M.A. from a university and is troubled by frustration. He develops tuberculosis and dies a dejected man. An unemployed youth with a degree of Master of Arts, is like an unbearable burden to the family. This is the tragedy of the Nur, who is also another type of marginalised character because he is jobless. At the end, we see that his situation puts an end to his life.

In the novels of Mulk Raj Anand we see the real picture of Indian society; he delineates the real life of coolies at Bombay or of the sweeper boy in that small village. He is more close to real life of coolies and sweepers available in India. What we read about the Mahant Nandgir and about the village moneylender Sain Dass of Nandpur village is the real scene of Indian society. It is true with reference to all kinds of Mahants and of all types of moneylenders. There is a general theme in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand, not a particular theme.

Anand tried to give his best, while he was working on a project of seven-volume long autobiography by the title *Seven Ages of Man*. And this project actually helped in the emergence of *Seven Summers* (1951), *Morning Face* (1968), *Confessions of a Lover* (1976), and *The Bubble* (1984). In these autobiographical works, we have a detailed glimpse of the author's life and his companions during their boyhood and adolescence in the background of the social and political landscape in the various cities and towns of the Punjab. Krishna, the hero is a copy of the author himself, who tells us unmistakably the view point of Mulk Raj Anand himself, related to Gandhiji and his methods of non-violent non-co-operation. We also find the description about the revolutionary ideology or the ideology of communism and the author's affinity towards it. Anand has written books on topics like 'Marx and Engels in India', 'Tagore', 'Nehru, Aesop's fables', and 'the Kama Sutra, Erotic sculpture' and on 'Indian ivories'.

Anand's novels are like results of a serious observation of India. These novels highlight the issues of poverty, strength and weakness. Here, one can hear the people's voices and read the common consciousness. His several protagonists, Anand himself pointed out, have their origin in the folk and the old classics, and Lalu is modelled after Raja Rasalu. Munoo, the coolie boy, owes himself to an orphan in a poem by Iqbal. Bakha takes his model from a story in *The Upanishads*, which is famously read in Northern India. If we were to talk about his protagonists, they seem originated from the Indian soil and represent their folk and traditions symbolically. Anand underlines the need to make the Indian society sensible. In his works, Anand himself focuses on the corrupt practices, hypocrisy, the problem of ignorance and illiteracy. He writes stories for the masses and underlines an ideology of socialism and

humanism, by which Individual can achieve better living and put an end to their problems.

It is quite right to say that *Untouchable* is the first and most important work of Anand because it demarcates him from other novelists and designates him as a novelist of the marginalised People, who are Dalit by birth or by status. Anand himself asserts:

I only say, behind this novel of mine - which is called the 'creative manifesto of Dalits in India' - there is Thomas Paine. And Ambedkar would not have been what he was if had not read Thomas Paine, who wrote *The Rights of Man*. (Naikar, *Indian English Literature* 127)

3.4 Anand and the Issue of Class-Struggle: Anand throughout his literary life has been concerned with the problems of the marginalised people. He delineated the picture of Bakha in *Untouchable* as he is in a continuous struggle to liberate himself from the slavery: from untouchability, liberation from poverty and freedom from all kinds of social and traditional bounding. Although Bakha is an untouchable, he hates the life style of outcastes and imitates the life of Tommies and dreams to live like them. His portrayal shows that he is fated to all kinds of sufferings, oppressions and exploitations at the hands of upper castes people. Anand, through the pathetic presentation of the untouchables, conveys the issue of class struggle for the eradication of untouchability and through this representation he also tries to ask for sympathy from the people of other classes and makes them aware to take the responsibility for the abolition of untouchability, as they are the suppressors and oppressors of them. This idea is also conveyed through the character of Gandhi, who,

actually in history, had the same opinion. Mulk Raj Anand reserves for himself a unique place in the history of Indian English Novel writing, as the one who pioneered the novel of protest and political novel centred on the existence of the human beings and on the life and struggles of the unprivileged and the wretched of India. He makes an attempt to rediscover their identity as human beings and as Indians. It was said to be a very brilliant attempt that invited a lot of opposition and critical disapproval. Anand created the field for a war against all such traditional and narrow minded forces and finally established himself as a novelist par excellence of the oppressed masses, exploited in the name of religion, caste, and class and rigorously kept out of the space for democratic rights. Anand explains his view on protest in a novel as:

When I say protest in a novel, I mean the up rush of feeling, not the imposition of thought; a conversion does not happen from a sermon, but from some odd compulsion in one's emotional life. (Khan, *Legacy* 100)

According to Anand, the social institutions like religion, caste, certain traditional aspects of marriage and sex seem obstructive to the natural growth of the individual and society. He was displeased with such type of social, economic and political evils and tried his best oppose them. Anand, through his writings, is known as a writer of having the fiery voice of the people, which is reflected in his novels and writings of protest. There may be some flaws in his style and technique but Anand is undoubtedly a good artist. One can say that his novels reveal his emotional involvement with subject and characters but as a novelist he is powerful in dealing with the problems from a distance.

3.5 Indianization of English Language and Mulk Raj Anand: Anand is one of those who first used the term 'Indian English'. Although Indian literature comprises several literatures but Indian writing in English is one of the voices in which India speaks. Undoubtedly, it is a new voice, but it is as much Indian as others. Deviation or Indianization of English is one of the styles of Anand's writing and it is clearly visible in all his novels and short stories. He uses the technique of playing with English Language in order to generate Indianism and Dalit consciousness in his work. There is an example of deviation:

I bow my forehead. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 140)

It will have no specific contextual unit in British culture, but in Indian culture it is a distinctive assertion, functioning in the contextual unit of greetings, as experimented by Anand. There are some more examples from *Untouchable* and *Coolie*:

'Salaam Hawaldarji', 'come ohe Bakhia, how are you?' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 85)

'Ram Ram, Sethji' (*Omnibus, Coolie* 205)

'Eater of your master' (Anand, *Coolie* 145) is common in Punjab only. There are some instances, which highlight the problems of upper caste Hindus and lower caste Hindus:

keep to the side of the road (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 37)

you low-caste vermin (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 37)

you circumcised son of a pig (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 10)

There are some more examples of the same kind of experiment with English language, which have been used by Anand in his novels. If we have a look at the language of master-servant communication, we can find a number of phrases and expressions, which disclose the particularity of English language like 'eater of your masters', 'of the evil stars', 'spoiler of my salt'(U58), and 'donkey's husband'. Some local and social problems are also visible in the language of parents, as they communicate with their children like: 'you have eaten my life'(C 143), 'would that you had died in my womb' and 'why did rear a serpent with the milk of my breast'. Women are addressed as 'May thy womb be dead', 'eater of my child', 'ari..... you prostitute'(Anand, *Untouchable* 20), and 'oh you prostitute of a wind'. In the same manner we see the instances of man to man communication 'the incestuous sister-sleeper' and 'you lover of your mother' (Anand, *Untouchable* 8). In all these examples we can clearly find the reflection of Indian society and its problems. Most of the expressions are part of local abusive words, which are commonly used for the marginalised and unprivileged people of the society.

As we go through the above examples, it can be said that by using this technique Anand is recreating Indian life and sensibility in English. He also tries to generate Dalit consciousness and at the same time, he is giving us a new kind of English that is purely Indian. Z. N. Patil also comments on Anand's use of English language in Indian writings:

Anand's language is full of realistic coinage. He translates Hindi words and phrases into English quite naturally. His vocabulary is full of typical Indian expressions. (Patil 105)

Anand uses regional words to give a realistic touch or Indian flavour to the narratives. Here are some examples from his novels like: for food he uses 'Chapati', 'roti', 'kheer', 'ladus', 'jalebi', 'parshad' in the novel *Untouchable*; and 'double-roti', 'gulabjamun', 'rasgulla', 'dal' in the novel *Coolie*. There are some other regional words used for food like 'Brinjal bhurta', 'halwa', 'papads', 'parathas', 'bhojan' in the novel *Private Life of Indian Prince*. For clothing, he wrote words like 'Dhoti', 'khaki', 'kot-patloon' in *Untouchable* and 'kurta', 'purdah', 'salwar', 'dupatta', 'palla' in *Private Life of Indian Prince*. For salutations, he makes use of 'Salaam', 'Sahib', 'sarkar', 'jan', 'babu', 'memsahib' in *Untouchable* and 'Ram Ram huzoor' in *Coolie*; 'Jayadeva', 'mai-bap', 'punditji', 'sriyut' in *Private Life of Indian Prince* and 'Jai Ram ji ki' in *The Road*. He provides some abusive words like 'Chandal' in *Untouchable*, 'bahinchod' in *Coolie* and 'betichod', 'sala', 'sali', 'badmash', 'bewaqoof', 'ooloo' in *Private Life of Indian Prince*. At some places, he has uses the technique of misspelling and changing the pronunciation of many words, in order to highlight the inability and roughness of the illiterate and uneducated characters. By doing this, he attracts our attention either towards the 'Indian' variety of English language or the 'English' variety of Hindi language. There are many instances in Anand's novels, where he has used changed form of the words, as highlighting the misspelling and roughness in language of the rustics: 'Fashun' for Fashion, 'Gentreman' for Gentleman, 'Laften Gornor' for Lieutenant governor, 'Santry inspictor' for Sanitary inspector, 'Jernel' for General, 'Dilli' for Delhi, 'Maraja' for Maharaja and 'Daktar sahib' for Doctor sahib.

Another device that Anand has used in his novels is of 'hybridization'. It is a mixture of two or more words, taking one from English and another from any Indian

language. He makes use of this technique to provide an Indian flavour to the narratives. These hybrid words can be divided into two groups: the open set and the closed set. In the open set, two different words are combined while in the closed set a suffix of English is added to an Indian word. There are some examples from his novels of open set and closed set: 'Tonga-wallah', 'congress-wallah', 'brahminee bull', 'double roti', 'rail-gari', 'biri-shop', 'angrezi race' and 'motor gari' are some examples of open set. 'Sadhuhood', 'sahibhood', 'dharmic culture', 'chaprasihood', 'madarihood' and 'mahajanhood' are examples of closed set. There is another kind of hybridization also, which Anand uses in his writings. It is interpolation of Hindi words in English sentences. Anand calls this a kind of speech named 'synthetic speech' (Patil 109). By using this device, he wants to tell the essentially Indian mood and situations through English language. With reference to this device, two examples are given here:

'Don't buk', said Bakha... (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 29)

'What is this buk buk?' Victor asked.... (*Omnibus, Private Life of an Indian Prince* 225)

Anand also uses literal translation of words, phrases and sentences from Indian language into English to create an Indian atmosphere. He clearly points out in *The King Emperor's English*: "I literally translate all the dialogue in my novels from my mother tongue and think out the narrative mostly the same way" (Harish 172). He uses in the novels like: 'rape-sister', 'rape-daughter', 'son of a swine', 'son of a dog', 'son of a bitch', 'you are our mother-father', 'ohe, you stomach is your own, even though the food you are eating has been provided by His highness!', 'my life is

lapsing and you indulge in blandishments', 'I am not dead, I am alive! Why are you all crying?', 'I have eaten your salt', 'so you betrayal of my salt'.

Anand sometimes transliterates complete sentences and bodily transfers Hindi utterances into English such as 'Aree wah, wah, kya kehne hain tere, meri piari jan!', 'Ram, Ram Sri Krishna... Hey Hanuman Jodah, Kali Mai', 'Om, om Shanti Deva', 'Bham, bham, bhole Nath', 'Sri Ram Chandra Ki Kai'.

We also find syntactical deviations in Anand's novel. These deviations seem different from the traditional norm, but are inevitable due to cultural contexts such as: 'They was hard with resentment', 'They was standing with open arms to embrace her', 'They was looking at her over the corn', 'They wants you inside'. In these examples we see that singular verbs are being used with plural pronouns. It is due to the unavailability of special pronoun for a respectable person in English. In Indian context women do not call their husband by name. They call them either via the name of a son or daughter or by using the respectable some pronouns like 'Aji', 'aap' and 'suniye'.

3.6 Depiction of Marginalised Sections: Anand, one of the fathers of Indian English writing, novelist, short story writer, and critic is one of those writers, who portrayed the marginalised communities of the Indian society. In his writings the element of sympathy is clearly visible, when he delineates the life of the poor and perishable Indians. According to Mulk Raj Anand, a society can be broadly classified into two categories– 'the privileged and the unprivileged section'. This categorisation of society is actually suggested by the Marxist affinities in the thinking of Anand. He was concerned with the unprivileged and marginalised section of the society and

portrayed them in his novels very realistically. Mulk Raj Anand believed that the real suggestion to a writer comes by realising the pains and frustrations of others:

It may lie in the transformation of words into prophecy. Because, what is a writer if he is not the fiery voice of the people, who, through his own torments, urges and exaltations, by realising the pains, frustrations and aspirations of others, and by cultivating his incipient powers of expression, transmutes in art all feeling, all thought, all experience - thus becoming the seer of a new vision in any given situation.

(Dhawan, *The Novels of Mulk Raj* 14)

There are some significant incidents in the life of Anand, which influenced his writings to take the marginalised as its main subjects. One tragic incident happened during his childhood days, which changed his belief in God. It was his first realisation at the age of eleven, when he lost his nine year old cousin, Kaushalya. She was very close to his heart but this relationship could not sustain for long and a deadly disease of lungs struck her down. It was quite disturbing for Anand and he could not understand why his cousin had to lose her life. He expressed his objection through a letter of protest to God arguing: 'why he had taken Kaushalya away?'. Here is a quote from Anand's essay:

My first real essay was a letter to God Almighty, asking Him why He had caused the death of my little cousin Kaushalya, at the age of nine, by inflicting on her the dread disease of lungs, when she had not done anything bad. I put the letter in the hands of the priest of the temple. But God did not answer my protest. So I have tended to regard Him,

since then, as the enemy of mankind. In fact, from the sky, determining the fate of everyone has been shaken more or less completely. And unless I am in the dark, and frightened of ghosts, or in some other danger, or using proverbial speech like “for God’s sake”, I have never invoked the giant Patriarch. (Sharma, *Indo- English* 10)

His second realisation came after the occurrence of ‘Jalianwalla Bagh Massacre’. On this occasion, he experienced the tortures of British officers, when he broke the curfew order unknowingly. He got seven strips of cane. After this incident he came to know the way people were being marginalised on their own land. It was a clear cut humiliation at the hands of foreigners.

Anand’s concern with the marginalised communities demarcates him as novelist with a purpose. He wrote for the betterment and upliftment of the marginalised people of the society. According to Anand, ‘Humanism meant love of man, the whole of man with all his weaknesses, instincts and impulses’. This is visible throughout all his novels. Anand believed that the real value of art comes through the actions of responsible humanism. This responsible humanism or literature with a purpose motivated him to write about the untouchables, the peasants, the coolies and the other suppressed sections of society. His life was devoted to the cause of humanity. He wrote not for art’s sake but for the sake of humanity. He wrote to reveal the real picture of Indian society with all its problems. It is actually for this reason that Anand was never inspired by the literature of escapism or fairy tales. He had never turned a deaf ear towards the problems of society but highlighted the issues of mankind and emphasised the responsible behaviour of men for those who are living on margins.

Anand's humanism is reflected throughout all his writings. He wrote against the system of caste and other social institutions, which were against the freedom of mankind. He believes in the only categorisation, it is that of the rich and the poor, of the haves and the have-nots, in short of the privileged and the unprivileged. Throughout all his writings, he had always been interested in highlighting the plight of the marginalised, arouse sympathy for them, and finally make way of their betterment. Coolies, untouchables, plantation labourers, villagers and factory workers all are on the margins of society, who are subjects of Anand's humanistic study. He is a writer of these people and their problems. He writes in his preface to the novel *Two Leaves and a Bud*:

It was natural after I had probed the soul of the sweeper Bakha in my novel *Untouchable*, and reproduced each wound on the heart and body of the hill-boy Mundy in the folk-epic *Coolie*, that I should record the journey of the Hillman Gangu through the vicissitudes of his later life, after his eviction from the stony half acre in the Punjab Himalayas and his enticement as an indentured labourer to the tea estates of Assam. All these heroes, as the other men and women who had emerged in my novels and short stories, were dear to me, because they were the reflection of the real people I had known during my childhood and youth.

In the year of 1921-22, Anand took part in the nationalist activities, non-violent campaigning and went to prison for a short time. During these days, he met Dr. Iqbal, whose poetry had become famous all over the Punjab. Under the influence of Iqbal and his poems, he also composed some poems. Apart from these he wrote for

the refinement of culture, tradition and attempted to find some solution to the problems of marginalised people. Anand, during his stay in London, observed that the sweepers after finishing their works, were dressed in suits and no one asked them whether they are touchables or untouchables. The condition of the sweepers of London was far better than that of the Indian sweepers. Saros Cowasjee writes:

India believes that it has long ago solved the question of untouchability by passing an act against it in parliament. The irony, of course, is that even today there are millions of untouchables in India. (36)

In this way he found the dignity of labour in the individual and wrote his first and very famous novel entitled *Untouchable* for their plight. By and large Anand set the scenes and actions of his novels in remote villages and cities of Punjab due to his well familiarity with these areas. He himself experienced their customs, religious practices and superstitions. He also observed social, political and economic conditions. Later he mentioned these things in his novels along with the plight of disadvantaged people. However his theme and characters always remained universal that were sufferings and sufferers.

3.7 Anand and his Character Portraits: Anand followed the notion of realism, while drawing the sketches of his famous characters like Bakha, Munoo and other marginalized types. As it is seen, Bakha in *Untouchable* and Munoo in *Coolie* are modelled on those of his boyhood playmates with whom Anand were well familiar. Bakha's humility is depicted with sheer brilliance:

He was grateful, grateful, haltingly grateful, falteringly grateful, stumblingly grateful, so grateful that he didn't know how he could

walk the ten yards to the corner to be out of the sight of his benevolent and generous host. The whole atmosphere was charged with embarrassment. He felt uncomfortable as he walked away. 'Strange! Strange! Wonderful! kind man! I didn't know he was so kind. I should have known. He always had such a humorous way about him! Kind, good man! He gave me a new stick, a brand-new stick!' (Cawasjee 88)

He also brought his characters from the regions of Punjab which were very much known to him. So the social manners, customs, ideas and beliefs of characters which we see in the novel are very realistic.

Anand's realism is too vivid when he portrays the character of Bakha in *Untouchable* getting up in the morning after an uneasy night, going to his work that is cleansing latrine, coming back to his home and lying outside his home in the winter sun for a little relax, before going back to his work again. Bakha's act of bringing back his injured playmate to his home and his parents' abusive words--'defiled, defiled'--to Bakha because his playmate belonged to the upper caste and he was from the lower position in the same hierarchical system. Bakha's younger brother Rakha's continuously running nose and Kali Nath, a hypocrite Temple priest, who attempts to rape Bakha's sister Sohni, all are totally realistic scenes delineated by Anand. As a social reformer, he wanted to reform the society through his writings and therefore he chose characters, whose life was full of miseries, sufferings and poverty. His famous characters are underprivileged and disadvantaged people and he is successful in making his readers sympathetic towards these characters. Apart from these two novels others are also variations on the same theme. Anand's realism and his concern to the

poor people of India is also seen when Munoo in *Coolie* says that 'there are only two kinds of people in the world: 'the rich and the poor' (*Omnibus, Coolie* 355). Caste does not matter.

While portraying the characters of his novels Anand looks compassionate. When he portrays the character of Bakha, a sweeper boy in *Untouchable* and Munoo, a coolie in *Coolie* his concern always remains to draw the attention of the readers on some important social and political problems affecting the life of marginalised people in India. It cannot be rejected that especially these two novels have aroused the conscience of the readers towards the problems of untouchables, coolies and marginalised people of India. The marginalisation of Anand's characters is both on the ground of social inequality and economic disparity. It is only Anand's compassion and progressive thinking that while describing the life of Bakha in *Untouchable*, at the end of the novel he offers three solutions for the sufferings of Dalits. The three offers are conversion to Christianity, Gandhi's brotherhood of men and the implementation of proper drainage system. Anand was possibly in favour of the third one. In his another novel *The Road* he deals with the problems of caste system through the story of Bhikhu, a chamar boy. It is obvious that Anand was vehemently opposing all kinds of marginalisation.

3.8 Mulk Raj Anand and the Scene of Indian English Novel: Anand's writings are charged with the idea of social responsibility and are more like the manifestos of the social problems including Dalit people and hegemonic tendencies. His literature is a literature with a purpose. He believes that literature must serve society, solve their problems and guide them. Anand, the distinguished novelist was a pioneer, realist, humanist and social protester. He received the award of 'Padma Bhushan', in 1967,

and his novel *Morning Face* (1968) got the 'Sahitya Academy award' in 1971. Moreover in 1978 he won the E. M. Forster award of Rs. 3000 for his novel, *The Confession of a Lover*, which was considered the best book of creative literature in the Indian English language. His language is marvellous in literal translation of Indian words, expressions and swear-words. Anand mainly deals with the poor folk of India. He portrays their poverty, misery and hunger on the canvas of socialism. Like Charles Dickens, Anand is a novelist of the lower, down-trodden and oppressed class:

Like Thomas Mann, Anand believes that politics is everybody's business and that the modern writer with a conscience cannot shut himself up in an ivory tower. Discussing his obligation to his fellow men, he quotes Marx: 'philosophers have so far interpreted the world, the thing is to change it,' and then goes on to ask: 'But where was one to begin?' (Cawasjee 40)

As Dickens wrote about the hungry and poor people of London, Anand wrote about the inhuman plight of the oppressed Indian masses which include sweepers, coolies, peasants, tea plantation labourers and village 'Chamars'. These people are the victims of capitalistic and caste-based exploitation, poverty, problems of untouchability, social injustice and cruelty, class hatred and race-hatred. All unprivileged people live the life of Dalits and share the same amount of victimisation at the hands of powerful. Smruti Ranjan Behera in his article '*The Literary Style of Mulk Raj Anand*' observes that Anand is similar to Dickens in the treatment of theme and he presents the real picture of India to the world. He asserts:

Like Dickens, Anand is a novelist of the lower; down-trodden whose lives are doomed and oppressed class. If Dickens wrote about the 'Hungry forties and London poor', Anand's novel depicts the inhuman plight of the oppressed Indian masses typical of which are a sweeper, a coolie, a peasant, a tea plantation labourer, a road-maker, a village Chamar who are all agonised victims of capitalistic exploitation, poverty, problems of untouchability, social injustice and cruelty, squalor, class-hatred and race- hatred. (Bhatnagar, *Indian Writing* 3. 12)

Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao are known as 'The trio' or 'the big three' on the canvas of Indian English Novel. This epithet was coined by famous English critic William Walsh for these great novelists, as they are all contemporary. They are the great producers of Indian English Writings. In fact, not only Indian but foreign critics as well have taken great notices of them. At time when Indians were considering 'English' as an alien language, these novelists broke the traditional consideration and started experimenting with the English language. This experimenting with Indian language has given a new identity to the Indian English writing. Mulk Raj Anand was surely a great figure in the area of Indo-English fiction and he has provided some new varieties to the Indian English. He wrote sixteen novels, twelve collections of short stories and more than twenty-five books on art and other general subject and hundreds of articles.

When these writers were engaged in their work India was under the British rule. In the colonial times India was not industrially developed and remained an agricultural country to produce and supply raw material to the industries in Great

Britain running. The British officers were extracting the wealth from India with the help of local zamindars. The laws of the land were designed to give benefits to the 'Zamindars' and 'taluqedars', who proved their loyalty to the white masters. But the conditions of peasants who actually produced harvest were extremely bad. During the colonial period, peasants were left with their labour to sell to earn their livelihood. They worked as a labour in the fields, went to cities as coolie, rickshaw-puller, mill worker, railway porter or domestic servants. But wherever they went they were exploited and treated badly and even they were not able to fulfil the basic needs of their lives.

India has been encountering the system of casteism for more than two thousand years and this hierarchical system has become a significant part of social thinking. Mainly there are four castes: Brahmin, Ksatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. The first three castes enjoy their all privileges. But the last one who is known as untouchable or outcaste is deprived of all social, religious and political rights. Among the untouchables themselves there are higher and lower categories. Sweeper class is the lowest among all and their touch and even their presence is considered unfortunate. They are prohibited to draw water from public well and restricted to go near shrines and temples. They have to survive on the remnants from the dinner of upper caste Hindus.

During the colonial period the condition of Indian women was also not very good. A wife was totally dependent on the mercy of her husband and she had to submit to her husband's authoritative behaviour helplessly. After India's independence on 15th August 1947 it was considered that a new period of hope, growth and development will begin. But soon during first twenty five years the

government confronted various unexpected and contradictory challenges. The problem of rehabilitation of refugees, the abolition of untouchability and equal rights of all classes brought a storm change in the social status and life standard of the marginalised communities of our society. With the abolition of zamindari system the relation between landowners and landless changed. With the emergence of feminist movement the traditional attitude of man towards woman came under hammer of criticism. The movement of peasants from villages to cities created the situation of another social division. The conflict between modern sciences and traditional values, improper religious practices troubled the modern man.

3.9 Anand and the Traits of Indian English Fiction: Indian English fiction came into existence in the second decade of twentieth century and by the time of independence it became a significant area of study and discussion. In 1960s a large number of novels were published. The pre-independent Indian English fiction had talked about the great national movement, the struggle for independence, the patriotic passion and spirit of Indian social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, K.C. Sen and Dayanand Saraswati. The novelists like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, and R.K. Narayan also wrote on the issues of nationalism and patriotic feeling. Gandhiji's call for struggle was significantly reflected in the novels of pre-independent India. It is quite clear that it was Anand who carried on the tradition of Tagore and Premchand, Bankim Chandra and Sarat Chandra to the matured state and brought the form of the novel with the latest development in England and Europe. His novels like *Coolie* and *Untouchable* present his life-long crusade against social injustices, oppressions and all forms of dehumanization, which led to the emergence of marginalized class. Indian writing in English has a very disorderly history. It had its origin in the first half of the

nineteenth century. However most of the early experiments were in verse. Prose of a non-fictional variety existed before the emergence of novel writing. For a very long time the Indian novelists were interested in writing history and romance. R.C.Dutt, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore were the famous fiction writers in India and Bengal in particular. Many of their Bengali novels were translated into English by them. It is actually with the coming of this brilliant trio that the Indian English novel came to be recognised within and outside India. The approach of these writers was both philosophical and social. Mulk Raj Anand who began writing fiction much later showed unmistakable signs of Rabindranath Tagore's influence.

Anand's contemporary novelist reflected impression of Gandhi's ideas, themes and teachings in their writings. Anand depicted the conditions of disadvantaged class while R.K. Narayan depicted the middle class man of south India and others like Raja Rao portrayed the heroic struggle and sacrifices of the Indian fighters for freedom in the early stages of the national movement. These novelists did not excessively praise the victory of Independence but they were mature enough in discussing the social and political issues of Indian society. Their novels are full of the spirit of enthusiasm, joy and hope. Anand's Lalu Singh in *The Sword and the Sickle* went to jail for non-cooperation with the 'zamindar'. Raja Rao's Gauri in his story *The Cow of Barricades* sacrificed her life for peace among all men. The style of these novelists was marked by simplicity, maturity and effectiveness. The Indian English novelists, in the post-independent India, display different tendencies as compared to their predecessors. Anand, Narayan and Raja Rao continued to write during and after the great upheavals of independence. Some Indian English novelists turned away from political issues and focused their attention on existential problems of the individuals or on social themes of universal kind.

The multicultural and ethnic-religious features of the Indian society influenced the post-independence Indian English novelists and compelled them to choose the themes of situations that had more or less the same value all over the country. That is why the range of the novel widened and the various features of Indian society, economic, political, religious and cultural were thoroughly covered by it. Hence the Indian English fiction grew both in variety and stature and flourished to its fullness with multiple forms. The basic tendencies of social realism, initiated by Anand, were taken up by the upcoming writers. Anand's pity and compassion for the poor and marginalized sections of society are visible in his novels. In the same way R.K. Narayan's novels and writings were highlighting the similar problems of Indian society. Problems, like the disintegration of joint families, and reinterpretation of woman's position in society, have been depicted in the novels of R.K. Narayan. There were economic issues like the unjust distribution of wealth, the poverty of the rural classes, the changed relations of land-owners and landless peasants, the impact of industrialization on the life of common man and the hired laborers, and the changed economic structure of the country. These problems were highlighted by Mulk Raj Anand. On the political plane, the influence of Gandhi's enigmatic personality on the mindset of nation and the national movement has been beautifully treated by R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao. The more sublime and loftier issues like religion, asceticism, myths and scriptures, ancient Indian culture and modern education system—get their sufficient coverage in the novels of Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan.

It can be easily said that these novelists in the post-independent period have succeeded in portraying the emerging tendencies, change in attitude, manner and aspirations of a nation, committed to improve the lives of disadvantaged people.

There was a brilliant mixture of Marxist thoughts, western ideals, Indian traditional and cultural values and social reformation available in the writings of these novelists. Their novels have powerfully talked about the disillusionment, economic inequalities, class discrimination, social and communal prejudices, political chaos and religious superstitions that affected the normal lives of men and women in every existence. Walter Allan writes about the English fiction:

Contemporary novels are the mirrors of the age, but a very special kind of mirror, a mirror that reflects not merely the external features of the age but also its inner face, its nervous system, coursing of its blood and the unconscious prompting and conflicts, which sway it. (18)

Walter Allan is right in saying that Indian fiction has boldly displayed both the aspects of Indian society: internal aspect and external aspect. There are themes in novels, which highlight the problems of individuals and there are also discussions and dialogues in the novels, where the reader gets a chance to look behind the canvas of problems.

3.10 Theme and Technique in Anand's novels: Anand was very much concerned with form of novel writing and it led him to make serious discussion regarding the standard of theme and technique. When a novel achieve the epic length and discusses various social problems in detail, there may be some kind of compromise with the values of theme and technique. If we talk about Anand's technique of novel writing, we can say that he organises his material in such a way that he provides unity of theme to the novel. Anand was of the view that, the novel demands a serious mental effort to control it from losing its form. In the popular themes of his novels, he

confined his subject matter to human beings and to their relations with each other in the present. In this way much that is metaphysical, or historical, was excluded, and the selected material became more amenable to artistic treatment. Further, he made full use of devices of contrast and balance to impart form and coherence to his material. In *Untouchable*, Bakha's day is an account of his passions soaring and plunging by turns; an elaborate pattern of parallelisms and contrasts runs through *Coolie*. The structure of his novels is mixture of the western realistic tradition of the novel with the Indian tradition of the moral fable. Saros Cowasjee writes about Anand's technique:

Anand's theories, though unoriginal, have a definite place in the study of his novels. They arise from his concept of literature, which is to reveal life in all its contrarities and in the process to create awareness in the reader. Conditioned by Marxian dialectics, the social impulse is, as with the writers of the thirties, at the heart of his writing. A work of art, be it a novel or a painting or a play, is first of all a social event. This explains why he gives maximum emphasis to the duties of a novelist (and to what a good novel should be), and very little to the tools at his disposal. (38)

Anand's style of dealing with theme in his novels was influenced by his encounter to the western ideas. Anand was responsible for Indianising a Western structure, derived from Karl Marx. He made experiment with this structure and applied it to the problems of Indian subcontinent. His novel writing seem more like the socialist realism in the mid twentieth century, in which writers were writing with a socialist propaganda. He describes the life of an untouchable and a coolie, following

the western structure of novel writing and his socialist beliefs. According to some critics he was sometimes called a 'communist writer' and also a 'propagandist', which was a result of his slight deviation from the naturalist and realist representation of Indian society. His novels seem more like the aggression of a social reformer, who writes with a mission and goes beyond the traditional structure of theme in a novel.

Anand had applied the Indian tradition of moral fable to the novel, which is actually a western art form. His novels are folk-oriented. By applying the form of the folk-tale, in its fabulous character, he displayed a study of the individual and group psychology of Indian society. He created a new kind of fable which develops the old Indian story form into a new age, by improving its enthusiasm and vitality and including the psychological understanding of the contemporary period. In a moral fable the evil is first exposed and it concludes with a desire-image or fantasy suggesting the way in which the evil is to be eradicated. This fusion of the western realistic novel and the Indian fable is seen at best in the structure of *Untouchable*. At the beginning of the day, Bakha is a natural man; the caste system has not yet inculcated vice into his character. He is portrayed, at work in the latrines and the scene illustrates two ideas: the Gandhian principle that all work is in the service of mankind and the feeling of executing a menial job. But in the novel Bakha's life is not full of problems of doing this menial job but because of the pernicious doctrine of caste with its vicious-circle identification of the work role-cleaning up dung-and the state of the outcaste's soul.

In this this situation, Anand created a narrative pattern, which follows the moral fable form and the principle of interplay of situation and character. Anand was interested in dealing with some significant features of Western short-story. The birth

of Bakha's consciousness defines Gandhi's psychological approach to the problem of untouchability, whereby the outcaste is encouraged to develop self-esteem in place of self-abasement. The evil of the social system has been exposed and the novel concludes with an image suggesting how the evil should be eradicated.

There is another device, which Anand has used to promote his social vision is the spokesman figure, the young poet, who is introduced in the final scene and explains the 'choice of possibilities' to a section of the crowd that includes the Bakha, also. The poet refers to Gandhi as 'the greatest liberating force of our age', but suggests that India 'has suffered for not accepting the machine'. If untouchables can develop a consciousness of self-respect and India adopts the flush-system, then untouchability may be eradicated. Anand applies the device of a spokesman, where his Marxist, Gandhian and other social thoughts are revealed through the dialogues of a spokesperson. These spokespersons are available in most of his novels. At the end of *Untouchable*, which is generally regarded as a serious fault, is seen to be integral both to the social purpose of Anand and to his adoption of the Indian moral fable. The device is reinvented in the final scenes of *Coolie* in the person of Mohan, revolutionary intellectual, who says to Munoo: 'come with me and we shall kill the landlord one day and get your land' and who at the end clutches the dying Munoo. This highlights that, despite the tragedy of the past, its victim dies briefly united to a potentially regenerated future. In Anand's third novel, *Two Leaves and a Bud*, Mohan has become a major character indicating that in this work Anand regarded the fable element as equally important as the portrayal of the peasantry and the exposing of corrupt imperialism.

The desire image and self-projection techniques are well applied in *The Big Heart*, in which the spokesman figure is again a poet and undoubtedly Anand's ideal of himself. The hero of the novel, Ananta, is a spontaneous roughish Adam, whose generous character is evident in his favourite saying: 'There is no talk of money; brother one must have a big heart'. The poet sees in Ananta the beginning of the new modern man. Ananta embodies those qualities of the heart and the poet, those of the head, which in combination will create the new Adam of Anand's future society. The poet's discourses at end to *The Big Heart* are not merely a chorus comment on the tragic action; they are intended to leave the reader with a 'catharsis of hope', the image of a desirable social form for which Ananta is a noble sacrificial prelude.

In the novels of Anand, there is an allegorical representation of theories and philosophical ideas. Anand's trilogy--*The Village, Across the Black Waters, the Sword and the Sickle*--is his most comprehensive attempt to define through allegory, myth, fable and 'poetic realism'. The hero of the trilogy, Lal Singh, evolves out of world of traditional myth, of religious ritual and metaphysical powers into the universe of Anand's modern myth: the people Humanism, Revolution, Reason, Human Love.

In *The Sword and the Sickle* this new myth replaces the ancient myth, which had provided a dance of death, Kaili-kalyug symbolic framework of *Across the Black Water*. Quite early in *The Sword and the Sickle* Anand describes the new Fate, which replace the 'old Fate' yet was equally 'cruel'. Anand's myth develops archetypal manifestations and values. Its classic incarnation, referred to reverentially, is the Russian Revolution; Marx Lenin, Gandhi and Nehru are its epic avatars; it reveals with mythic certitude and folk simplicity the division between rich and poor and it

chants the poetry of Humanism, proclaiming that 'love and understanding', not 'murder', is the way to the 'utopia of society'. Lal Singh is modern India personified. This new myth is not imposed from outside but evolves out of Anand's material out of his social and humanitarian concerns. Thus the form and content are integrated to each other and to the social context. His novels are organic wholes in this sense.

In some of Anand's novel there are noble-minded and finely drawn male characters like Bakha, Munnu, Bikkhu, Lalu and Ananta. But as is it is clear to readers, these charcters were suggested by the land of Punjab. They, like Anand, all suffer a sense of isolation in the society. They are brought up by illiterate parents who are subscribed to traditions and customs that submerge their sense of individuality and self-realisation. Anand has depicted all the fine, gentle and self-sacrificing qualities of the Indian wife and her dilemmas in the changing epoch of the early twentieth century. He shows how the 'new' women are transformed by the changing rules of society into finer representatives of their sex. Anand thus represents that the men and women he valued most highly in his life were characterized in his eyes not so much by piety or intellectual distinctions as by their humanity. He was also a man of western teaching, who had read Rousseau, Rimbaud, Joyce and Gorki and we are familiar with the humanitarian writings of these writers:

Anand's wide and desultory readings were to have their bearing on the novel. Rousseau's idea of the 'noble savage' particularly appealed to him and this is not difficult to see; so did Tolstoy's populism. Arthur Rimbaud's *A Season in Hell* (1873) vivified his own preoccupation with the symbolic journey through hell his outcastes had been going through, and Picasso's pictures of the 'Blue and the Pink Periods' dealing with prostitutes, beggars, drunkards, and harlequins seemed

relevant to his subject. But the works which most influenced him were Gorki's *The Lower Depths* (1902) and *Creatures that Once Were Men* (1901) and Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922). Like Gorki he went to the lowest dregs of humanity in search of his hero, like Joyce he dramatized the events of a single day. (Cawasjee 41)

In all his novels and writings, Anand has been urging his readers to recognise the fundamental values of human living and stay attentive towards the real enemies of freedom and socialism. His mission as a writer was to help the untouchables, the peasants, the serfs, the coolies and the other suppressed members of Indian society and bring them to the level of human dignity and self-awareness. Anand used the novel to make a conscious attempt to focus his reader's attention upon the unprivileged members of Indian society.

The distinction of Anand as a writer has always been due to the variety of themes and the treatment in his works. His novels are mainly on human suffering caused by political, economical, social and religious factors.

3.11 Summing up: Mulk Raj Anand is both an artist and a reformer and his writings have provided a literary support to the development of Dalit consciousness. Anand was heavily influenced by Gandhi and Marxism and his writings highlight a meeting point of Dalit liberation theories and socialist vision of an artist.

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Chapter –4

**DALIT CONSCIOUSNESS IN MULK RAJ
ANAND'S *UNTOUCHABLE***

Chapter – 4

DALIT CONSCIOUSNESS IN MULK RAJ ANAND'S *UNTOUCHABLE*

4.0 Introductory: Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* is a novel of protest, which highlights the traumatic episodes in a hierarchical society and provides a literary background to the Dalit consciousness.

4.1 Background to the Novel: Since the presumed commencement of Indian civilization untouchables have been the most deprived, suppressed, and oppressed, down trodden and marginalized class of Indian society. In fact it has been considered an evil in the name of humanity. Mulk Raj Anand was one of those novelists, who closely observed this fact and challenged it through his writing by underlining the problems of these communities. Dr. Deepa Rani in her article "Linguistic Experimentations in Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*", observes that "With the publication of *Untouchable*, Anand had firmly associated himself with that brand of writers who saw 'political, social and human causes as genuine impulses for the novel and poetry'" (1). When Anand started writing *Untouchable* in 1930s, it was rejected by almost nineteen publishers till the date of its publication. Anand had experienced a sad life with suicidal tendencies while writing this novel but fortunately, later he was saved and encouraged by a British poet named Oswell Blakeston. In 1935, when the novel was published with the preface from E.M. Forster, it became immensely popular among the readers. It was actually Anand's most famous and accomplished novel. In the words of Forster:

Untouchable could only have been written by an Indian and by an Indian who observed from outside. No European, however

sympathetic, could have been created the character of Bakha, because he would not have known enough about his troubles. And no untouchable could have written the book, because he would have been involved in indignation and self-pity. Mr. Anand stands in the ideal position. By caste he is Kshatriya, and he might have been expected to inherit the pollution-complex. But as a child he played with the children of the sweepers attached to an Indian regiment, he grew to be fond of them, and to understand a tragedy which he did not share. He has just the right mixture of insight and detachment, and the fact that he has come to fiction through philosophy has given him depth. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 4)

Untouchable deals with poignant situations of human life and such kind of story did hardly exist in the history of Indian fiction. It was not popular in those days to write about the people who were most marginalized. Anand took this task in his hands and started writing until the end of his life. Almost in all of his writings, we see the elements which deal with the marginalized people.

Anand's *Untouchable* is a simple description of a single day in the life of a sweeper boy, Bakha and it takes place in a small area. His father, Lakha is a Jamadar of all the sweepers in the town and cantonment. He has one sister, Sohni and a younger brother, Rakha. He is of eighteen years and his job is to clean latrines. It is because of his engagement with the continuous physical work that he is able-bodied and strong, with a sort of dignity that does not belong to the average scavenger. This novel begins with a description of the outcastes' colony, where not only sweepers but also leather workers, the barbers, the washer man, the water carriers and the grass

cutters reside. Here some lines are quoted from the text which describes their condition:

A group of mud walled houses that clustered together in two rows under the shadow both of the town and the cantonment, but outside their boundaries and separate from them. There lived the scavengers, the leather workers, the washer man, the barbers, the water- carriers, the grass cutters and other outcastes from Hindu society. A brook ran near the lane, once with crystal clear water, now soiled by the dirt and filth of the public latrines situated about it, the odour of the hides and skins of dead carcasses left to dry on its banks, the dung of donkeys, sheep, horses, cows and buffaloes heaped up to be made into fuel cakes. The absence of a drainage system had, through the rains of various seasons, made of the quarter a marsh which gave out the most offensive smell. And altogether the ramparts of human and animal refuse that lay on the outskirts of this little colony, and the ugliness, the squalor and the misery which lay within it, made it an 'uncongenial' place to live in. (*Omnibus, Untouchable 7*)

The account of a single day in the life of Bakha, the protagonist is made up of a series of incidents with which he confronts in his daily life. Some episodes are happy and some are painful as a slap that he receives from an upper Hindu caste for polluting him. Instances like the molestation of his sister Sohini by temple priest, Kali Nath and abuses from a housewife are sad episodes of his life. In the novel we have a series of such episodes and after so many ups and downs the novelist comes to the end and gives three solutions for the salvation of sweepers. The first solution is conversion

to Christianity as the boy had heard that Jesus Christ considers all human beings equal. He does not divide society between touchable and untouchables. The second idea believes in Gandhism that all human beings are equal and no work can be called menial as Gandhi believed in assigning the job of sweeping to a Brahmin. The third solution is an introduction of flush system which was suggested by a modern poet who believed that no god is needed to rescue the untouchables. The liberation of untouchables is only possible through the flush system—‘the machine that clears the dung’ (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 127). Bakha returns to his home and sleep on a wretched bed optimistically lost in thought that “on the surface of the earth if not in the depths of the sky, a change is at hand”. According to Saros Cowasjee, “Anand’s literary career really began with *Untouchable* in 1935” (Cowasjee 19). This statement by Cowasjee signifies the publication of *Untouchable*.

Many critical articles and books written on Anand’s writings cover and deal *Untouchable*. This novel has been prescribed in literature syllabi in many of the Universities and colleges. The fame and successfulness of this novel is visible in the words of Arun Mukherjee, he explains:

Mulk Raj Anand’s *Untouchable*, published in 1935, is one of the canonical texts of Indo-Anglican literature. It has been reprinted several times and has been translated about twenty languages. Although the critics are divided about the novel’s artistic merit, there is general agreement that the novel broke new ground in terms of its subject matter and its ostensible sympathy for that section of India’s downtrodden called ‘the untouchables.’ (35-36)

The subject matter of novel raised the question of its appropriateness because the hero of the novel spends his day in cleaning latrines. Marlene Fisher explains, “Untouchable broke sharply with certain British and Indian traditional attitudes and habits of thought particularly in its ideas about what is clean and unclean” (28). This was the difficulty which caused for its publication. Forster in preface of the novel defends it as “indescribably clean... it has gone straight to the heart of its subject and purified it” (Forster 3). Further he explains:

Indians, like most Orientals, are refreshingly frank; they have none of our complexes about functioning, they accept the process as something necessary and natural, like sleep. On the other hand they have evolved a hideous nightmare unknown to the west: the belief that the products are ritually unclean as well as physically unpleasant, and that those who carry them away or otherwise help to dispose of them are outcastes from society. (3)

Due to this nightmare and orthodox belief, Bakha and other outcastes suffer exploitation and oppression. As they are bound to clean human waste they are considered to be polluted. In the novel Bakha is represented as a clean and sincere boy. When he cleans dirt, he keeps himself clean and away from dirt even after doing so he suffers from untouchability and is unable to understand this treatment. He says: “They think we are mere dirt because we clean their dirt”, and tries to get rid of it. Bakha is so clean that even Havaladar Charat Singh who was abusing Bakha some moments earlier for cleansing latrines accepts his self-consciousness. When he comes out of the toilet, he says:

Here was a low caste man who seemed clean! He became rather self conscious, the prejudice of the 'twice-born high caste Hindu against stink, even though he saw not the slightest suspicion of it in Bakha, rising into his mind. He smiled complacently. Then, however, he forgot his high caste and the ironic smile on his face became a childlike laugh. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 13)

Saros Cowasjee says:

The novel unfolds with a child of modern India shackled by age-old traditions; the Hindus who pride themselves on their cleanliness gargle and spit in the stream and pollute the water, while a person incomparably cleaner than themselves is treated like dirt. (55)

This orthodox and dogmatic belief, through which Bakha has been experiencing his life, creates central conflict in the novel.

Anand is not only sympathetic but empathetic in his descriptions of the story in the novel and motivates his readers for the same and acts for the betterment of the marginalized class to make the society free from this curse. His anti-imperial and anti-caste sentiments reflect in this. He deliberately wants to evoke for a large-scale change in the structure of social, educational, economical and psychological field. Anand believes that sympathy will improve the identity of marginalized communities and will abolish evils like caste system and class distinction, which are based on the theory of social demarcation. The destruction of identity is not a matter of grave concern for Anand but the liberty that has been snatched from the lower class people by social restriction. Forster admires Anand's separation from Europe and outcasts

and says that this separation allows him to present the more appropriate picture of outcaste people and imperial system in *Untouchable*. This distance also confirms Anand to a belief that sympathy functions communally. He explains:

I could not, of course, sense the suffering of the poor directly because I had always been comparatively better off. No, mine was secondary humiliation, the humiliation of seeing other people suffer. (Anand, *Apology* 116-17)

The second humiliation that he refers in these above quoted lines is the crucial one and he wants it to be felt by the people because he believes that degradation of one section of the society is in fact the degradation of the whole society. When non-marginalized section of society becomes aware of such kind of humiliation, there comes the appropriate moment of social revolution. He desires a reformation and after the occurrence of change he hopes:

The future men and women could go on, slowly to recognize that it is one world, for us all, together, where the seas and skies are connecting highways and not dividing waters or national air spaces. (Anand, *Apology* 4)

In other words it can be said that the curse of untouchability and large-scale dehumanization can be prevented when the whole society realizes its inhumane and harsh effects.

Anand as a humanist asserts that it is the responsibility of those who are in power to change the condition and treatment of untouchables and poor. Anand seeks to persuade the upper caste people and British men and women to act on behalf of the

untouchables. For this he portrays character of Charat Singh, who in spite of coming from a high class could not stop himself from praising Bakha and helping him. Anand's inclusion of Gandhi and Gandhi's ideas in the novel and his great concern for the eradication of untouchability is a real address to problems of society. The idea of introducing 'flush system' also conveys the message that it is the responsibility of others to eradicate untouchability.

4.2 Dalit Consciousness as a Background to the Novel: The impression of Dalit consciousness is visible throughout the novel, in the description of the place where outcastes reside, the treatment of life at the level of language and character sketches like Bakha, Lakha, Rakha, Sohini and Chota; and also in suggesting the three solutions for the eradication of untouchability. The description of the place where outcastes live can be read as a remarkable beginning in the novel:

A group of mud walled houses that clustered together in two rows under the shadow both of the town and the cantonment, but outside their boundaries and separate from them. There lived the scavengers, the leather workers, the washer man, the barbers, the water- carriers, the grass cutters and other outcastes from Hindu society. A brook ran near the lane, once with crystal clear water, now soiled by the dirt and filth of the public latrines situated about it, the odour of the hides and skins of dead carcasses left to dry on its banks, the dung of donkeys, sheep, horses, cows and buffaloes heaped up to be made into fuel cakes. The absence of a drainage system had, through the rains of various seasons, made of the quarter a marsh which gave out the most offensive smell. And altogether the ramparts of human and animal

refuse that lay on the outskirts of this little colony, and the ugliness, the squalor and the misery which lay within it, made it an 'uncongenial' place to live in. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 7)

This is the place where Dalits live, physically cut off from the society, socially and economically exploited and degraded. There is no facility, no water, no cleanliness, no drainage system--only dirt and dirt. The stream beside which these people live is filled with the waste and filth and on the bank of that carcasses are lying. Bakha represents the marginalized lives of Dalits in India and his simple presence in the living situations like the one, in which he is standing at the shop of a betel-leaf seller, highlights his internalized marginalization.

He halted suddenly, and, facing the shopkeeper with great humility, joined his hands and begged to know where he could put a coin to pay for a packet of 'Red-Lamp'. The shopkeeper pointed to a spot on the board near him. Bakha put his anna there. The betel-leaf seller threw some water over it from the jug with which he sprinkled the nickel piece and threw it into the counter. Then he flung a packet of 'Red-Lamp cigarettes' at Bakha, as a butcher might throw a bone to an insistent dog sniffing round the corner of his shop. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 34)

From the above example we can see that the greatness of Anand lies in the true and real depiction of his characters. Here it is only a matter of buying a packet of cigarettes from a betel shop. But the picturization of this act is so real and touching that it seems, Anand has painted a picture and presented it before his readers. Anand's

Untouchable is also considered the first manifesto of Dalit writing. In the words of A. S. Dasan: “Anand’s *Untouchable* may be read and reread as the first imaginative rendering of the Indian social manifesto for Dalit liberation and identity” (38).

4.3 Dalit Consciousness and Language in the *Untouchable*: The language and style of Anand goes parallel to his theme and fictional objective. The manner of narrative is picaresque and the style and language are extremely relevant. One instance of Anand’s capacity for adapting the tempo and rhythm of his prose is where the narration is attuned to the varying speed of the train suggestive of the urban and rural scenes that are passed. Even the abusive language and the swear words of different characters do not jar as they sound natural in the mouths of the respective characters. Although Anand does not always exercise artistic confinement in the use of such ‘uncivil’ language, he has struck the right measure in this novel. In fact the artistic value of this work is immensely enhanced by the style and language that Anand has masterfully devised and employed. Anand adapts and modulates his language to suit different characters and situations thus providing a richness to it.

Anand rarely innovates with his language and hardly introduces new linguistic structures. But there is certain elasticity in his language which enables him to create the language or idiom suited to the particular character or the specific situation. He has been criticised and praised for using Indian or Punjabi words and expressions especially in conversations. There is also an abundance of swear words which in spite of being part of natural conversation of the speakers, seem offensive when repeatedly used. Some critics justify Anand’s use of the “swear words and phrases” as suggestive of the situation and characters living in them. Nevertheless one cannot digest a habitual use of such offensive expressions by a writer of Anand’s calibre. An

overdose of even a good technique can corrupt an otherwise-well-written narrative. Anand's occasional display of metaphorical style and rhetoric gives one, the proof of the master who is behind it.

Anand's technique of expressing the general or the universal through the experiences or reflections of a single character like Munoo in *Coolie*, Bakha in *Untouchable* or even Ananta in *The Big Heart*, Gauri in *The Old Woman* unfolds pages for his artistic temper and commitment. Anand is capable of adapting his language and style to suit the mode and tone of the narrative or story. His artistic detachment from the story or plot or the characters in some of his novels is worthy of praise. His objectivity in these novels is commendable. It is true that the endings of *coolie* and *Untouchable* are not in progress with the action and plot of the novel and perhaps it is Anand's artistic devotion to humanity. However, it has its own legitimate ground which may be analysed within the larger reality of helplessness and hopelessness and the delineation of present situation of mass poverty and exploitation. The prophetic notion behind such situations could have been effectively affected by Anand for reviving and mobilising all liberationist forces of the world.

4.4 Dalit Consciousness and the Delineation of Dalit Characters: Anand was a great humanist so he took real characters from the society for depicting real situations in his novels, like Bakha, Kali Nath, Sohini and others. He talks about this in his 'Preface' of *Two Leaves and a Bud*:

All these heroes as the other men and women who had emerged in my novels are dear to me because they were the reflections of the real people I had known during my childhood and youth. And I was only

repaying the debt of gratitude. I loved them for much of the inspiration- they had given me to mature into manhood. When I began to interpret their lives in my writing, they weren't mere phantoms. They were the flesh of my flesh and blood and obsessed me in the way, in which certain human beings obsess an artist's soul. And I was doing no more than what a writer does when he sees to interpret the truth from the realities of his life. (*Indian English Literature* 106)

And they are not mere real characters from society but they are also the most marginalized, oppressed, exploited and downtrodden untouchable and sweepers about whose status E.M. Forster rightly asserts:

The sweeper is worse off than a slave, for the slave may change his master and his duty even become free, but the sweeper is bound for ever, born into state from which he cannot escape and where he is excluded from social intercourse and the consolations of his religion. Unclean himself, he pollutes others when he touches them. (*Indian English Literature* 106)

Most of Anand's characters, including Bakha the sweeper boy, would in reality be communicating in regional variations of Hindi and Punjabi, therefore the use of English language as the medium for conversation in the novel is by itself counter-realist. Yet, by translating Hindi and Punjabi expressions and speeches into English, Anand attempts to represent an Indian experience by introducing the regional colour in his novel. Anand's use of local words and phrases to highlight the Indianness can be quantitatively witnessed in his description of Indian features and

delineation of characters in *Untouchable*. The manner in which Anand has designed the character of Bakha is an acute display of the real social situation. Bakha's humility, joining hands, begging and seller's act of purifying coin and throwing packet of cigarettes on Bakha—these situations can only surround the untouchables or marginalized. 'Ohe, lover of your mother', 'ohe, son of a pig', 'illegally begotten' are the abuses those Bakha receives from his father and the abuse 'ohe, scoundrel of a sweeper's son' he gets from Havildar Charat Singh. There are other abuses also that he gets from the upper caste Hindus throughout the novel such as 'son of a swine', 'low caste vermin' etc. The purpose of quoting these abuses from the text is meant to show the conditions in which untouchables like Bakha live. In fact, they live in such a socially, morally and politically degraded condition that they do not even have access to the gentle/ plain language and the languages they use exhibit their miserable conditions. It is only untouchables who live on the mercy of the upper caste hindus and depend on their disused food and clothes. They live in such a condition that they get addicted to drinking alcohol and eating carcasses. These are some of the things which have been discussed in the novel.

4.5 Bakha Representing the Dalit Consciousness: Bakha, the protagonist of *Untouchable*, is not representing simply a life in trouble but he represents the whole troubled community. It is through the representation of just one day in the life of Bakha, the novelist conveys the message of all the sufferings of the untouchables. He is an untouchable and a creature, surrounded by all kinds of filthy things, available in his surroundings. He, at the best of his efforts, tries to keep himself clean. He hates the people who keep themselves dirty like his own young brother Rakha, whose nose always keeps blowing. Bakha being a Dalit is too much conscious of his identity.

During the day he cleans latrines, plays hockey match, brooms the streets of the town, defends his sister against a hypocritical Brahmin priest's charge that she defiled him, attends the wedding of a childhood friend and listens to Gandhi at a public rally. During all these activities he develops more and more consciousness of his position within society and subsequently understands that his identity as an untouchable is slippery. Fisher sees the development of Bakha's character as central to the novel. She claims:

The heart of *Untouchable*, however, is not in its manifest social plea for the abolition of untouchability. It lies, rather, in the kind of person Bakha is. It lies in his trustingness, in his naiveté, and in his still unquenchable wonder at life. (29)

Untouchable describes Bakha's gradual development towards critical understanding of his role in Hindu society as a sweeper, which is religious adherence to Hinduism. His consciousness of the instability of his social identity is the result of the sympathy he gets from others in one of the episodes in the novel concerning Ram Charat Singh, his sister Sohini, his friend the Colonel, and Gandhi. Anand's portrayal of Bakha also provokes the readers to sympathize with him as he expects his readers to act for socio-political reform and abolish the caste system. By the end of the novel these sympathies make him feel that it will be possible in future that he will not be treated as untouchable, outcaste and marginalized one. Nevertheless his hopefulness neither frees him from untouchability nor changes his social status as an outcaste.

In the novel Bakha is seen copying the behaviors of others specially 'tommies' and disliking the behaviors of outcaste people. It seems that he is continuously thinking and struggling for better life and reckons that mimicking will make him free

from untouchability and outcaste status. But it goes in vain when he realizes that 'except for his English clothes there was nothing English in his life' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 9).

The character of Bakha is based on Anand's childhood friend, a sweeper boy by the similar name 'who excelled in games and despite the lack of formal education could recite whole cantos of Waris Shah's Heer-Ranjha' (Cawasjee 41). Bakha's character sketch was very innovative in those days when Anand was writing this novel. Anand had been interested in depicting such type of characters:

The very marked but different literary style that of introducing Lower Class in fiction was the most revolutionary and significant contribution of Anand. He gave entry to a whole class of new characters who were forbidden to enter the novels in India. (*Indian Writing in English* 3: 18)

Bakha in the novel is also expert in sports and shows hunger for education but unfortunately 'schools were meant for the babus, not for the bhangis' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 31). In regard to his thirst for knowledge recently he had gone and bought a first primer of English. But his self-education hadn't proceeded beyond the alphabet (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 32). Then he gets a chance to meet a young one babu and manages to finalize a deal with him to teach against an Anna per lesson. While making the deal final with the boy he says 'I shall pay you for it', 'I will pay you an anna per lesson' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 32). Anand also argues through his novel that 'lowest of the lowly' is a hindrance for our society to be progressive, modern and humane. E.M Forster in his Preface to *Untouchable* says about these outcastes that "Really it takes the human mind to evolve anything so devilish.... The sweeper is worse off than a slave, for the slave may change his master and his duties

and may even become free, but the sweeper is bound forever, born into a state from which he cannot escape and where he is excluded from social intercourse and the consolations of his religion. 'Polluted himself, he pollutes others when he touches them' (Anand 6). Therefore, the whole society must take the responsibility to end the injustices and oppressions done to the outcastes.

Bakha in the novel is portrayed as 'a young man of eighteen, strong and able-bodied' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 7). He is fascinated towards the life of Tommies who 'had treated him as a human being' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 7). These 'superior people' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 65) represent the life that Bakha wants to live. He describes the life of Tommies as they sleep 'on strange, low canvas beds covered tightly with blankets; eating eggs, drinking tea and wine in tin mugs; going to parade and then walking down to the bazaar with cigarettes' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 8). Bakha is so overwhelmed with the desire to live the life of Tommies that he considers items of clothing, the symbols of superior life, he desires:

Even since he was a child he had walked past the wooden stall on which lay heaped the scarlet and khaki uniforms discarded or pawned by the Tommies, pith sola topees, peak caps, knives, forks, buttons, old books and other oddments of Anglo-Indian life. And he had hungered for the touch of them. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 11)

By copying the behavior of Tommies Bakha dreams that he will be able to escape the degradation of his existence. It also shows his desire to escape his identity as a sweeper and he thinks that he will be respected like superior people. During the course of copying the English people, he succeeds in acquiring the dress of soldiers

but when he wears the dress he provokes greater attention to his pseudo-Englishness. The boys of outcaste's colony, Even Chota and Ram Charan, cut jokes with him on account of his new costume, calling him 'pilpali sahib' (imitation of sahib)' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 9). The joking of Bakha by their friends is not as torturous as the verbal, physical and emotional humiliations he gets from others during the whole novel. He feels humiliated even by his father's regular abuses, and blames him for leaving his work to his son while enjoying the status of superiority as the Jemadar (the sweeper) of the town and cantonment. Complaining to himself about his father, he says:

He always keeps abusing me. I do all his work for him. He appropriates the pay all right. He is afraid of the sepoys. They call him names, he abuses me. He is happy when they call him Jemadar. So proud of his izzat! He just goes about getting salaams from everybody. I don't take a moment's rest and yet he abuses me. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 9-10)

Bakha's complain is comprehensible because Lakha, Bakha's father, calls him a 'son of a pig', and 'illegally begotten' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 10-11). Lakha's ill-treatment of Bakha becomes clearer when Anand distinguishes him from Bakha's memory of his dead mother as a kind who used to give him 'a brass of tankard full of a boiling hot mixture of water, tea-leaves and milk from the steaming earthen saucepan' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 10). With regard to Lakha's unsympathetic attitude, Saros Cowasjee elaborates, "Though Anand's sympathies are with the poot, it would be an over-simplification to presume that all virtue embodied in them and

that the rich are irredeemably bad” (Cawasjee 72). Lakha is neither virtuous nor kind and moreover he abuses his son again and again which creates trouble for him:

He (Bakha) wrinkled his dark, broad, round face with the feeling of pain that came up into his being and made his otherwise handsome features look knotted and ugly. And thus he lay, awaiting his father’s call, hating to hear it yet lying anxiously in expectation of – the rude bullying order to get up. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 10)

It is not only Bakha but his sister, Sohini too, who has been badly treated by Lakha. Anand describes, “Then he frowned in the gruff manner of a man who was really good and kind at heart, but who knows he was weak and infirm and so bullied his children, to preserve his authority, lest he should be repudiated by them, refused and rejected as the difficult old rubbish he was” (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 25). These lines indicate that Lakha’s angry and unkind attitudes are to maintain his authority over his family as a head and also to avoid the protest of his children against him. Lakha learns this unkind attitude from upper caste people who abuse, exploit and mistreat lower castes to retain their power and superiority over them. In this way Lakha abuses his children to keep and continue his authority over them.

Abuses are poured on Bakha again and again. Once when he was returning from the bazaar, in the halfway an upper caste person gets touched by him. Then he was forced to apologize, surrounded by the crowd, who are ready to attack him and taking sadistic delight in watching him troubled by the abuses and curses. The man, who was touched, calls Bakha, ‘a low caste vermin’, a ‘swine’ and a ‘cock-eyed son of a bow-legged scorpion’ (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 37-38). Bakha’s apology increases

man's anger and he abuses him more severely. The people gathered "formed a circle round Bakha, keeping at a distance of several yards from him, but joining in to aid and encourage the aggrieved man in his denunciations" (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 39). In this situation Bakha, cannot even run away because he is conscious of his status and thinks that if he will try to run away, others also will be touched and polluted so due to this moral barrier he stays there silently. The man who was polluted again heavily comes down:

Don't know what the world is coming to! These swine are getting more and more uppish,' said a little, old man. 'One of his brethren who cleans the lavatory of my house, announced the other day that he wanted ten rupees a month instead of five rupees, and the food that he gets from us daily.' (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 39)

The polluted man accuses Bakha of walking in street, "As if he owned the whole street!" (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 39), a little urchin complains that Bakha has beaten him and other members of the crowd are accusing him and outcastes people of irresponsibility and laziness. Bakha being conscious of his position says "I am an untouchable! An untouchable!" and his inner torment speak loudly "Posh, Posh sweeper coming!" (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 41). Sweepers, who belong to the untouchable class, form the subject of discussion in the novel and their status in the society which is based on four varna (class system based on profession) decides the major conflict. According to Rig Veda 'varna' was created by the division of the body of ancient man. This class which also means complexion tells the social status of the people. The gods sacrificed this ancient man to create all living beings, heavens and earth. The 'Prusahasukta' hymn (a hymn of Rig Veda, dedicated to the Prusha, the "Cosmic Being"), talks about the four classes as:

The Brahmin was His mouth, of both His arms was the Kshatriya, His thighs became the Vaishya and from his feet the sudra was produced.
(Ralph 603)

Brahmins were assigned to be the teachers of mankind and Kshatriyas were to carry weapons for the protection of people. Vaishyas (including peasant and businessmen) were to provide food for the people and Sudra to serve the other three varnas and to remain at the lower level of society. The first three were considered purer in comparison to the fourth one and were seen as twice-born. The Sudra status was considered so low that even their touch was taken as polluting the other castes.

Untouchables were so much degraded that even they were not allowed to have access to water from the common well for a long period of time in history. To get water they used to go to the wells and wait for someone to fill their pitchers. Anand has painted this scene in his novel like this:

So the outcastes had to wait for chance to bring some caste Hindu to the well, for luck to decide that he was kind, for Fate to ordain that he had time – to get their pitchers filled with water. They crowded round the well, congested the space below its high brick platform, morning, noon and night, joining their hands in servile humility to every passer-by; cursing their fate, and bemoaning their lot, if they were refused the help they wanted; praying, beseeching and blessing, if some generous soul condescended to listen to them, or to help them.’ (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 18)

And for their food they had to depend on the upper caste Hindus. How Bakha gets his food, is worth seeing in the novel *Untouchable*:

‘Bread for the sweeper, mother. Bread for the sweeper,’ he (Bakha) called standing at the door of the first house. His voice died down to the echo of ‘thak, thak, thak’, which stole into the alley. ‘The sweeper has come for the bread, mother! The sweeper has come for the bread,’ he shouted a little louder. But it was of no avail. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 55)

After going to several doors for his bread he gets at one but it is worse than getting. See the line from the novel, ‘Vay Bakhya, take this. Here’s your bread coming down.’ And she flung it at him (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 59).

They were also prohibited from entering into temples, schools and they were not allowed even to listen to the hymns of Vedas. Bakha, in *Untouchable* wanted to live the life of Tommies, and he talked about his wish to his uncle. His uncle replied:

His uncle at the British barracks told him, when he first expressed the wish to be a sahib, that he would have to go to the school if he wanted to be one. And he had wept and cried to be allowed to go to school. But then his father had told him that schools were meant for the babus, not for the bhangis. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 31)

According to Ambedkar the influence of casteism destroyed the common public spirit:

Caste has killed public spirit. Caste has destroyed the sense of public charity. Caste has made public opinion impossible. Virtue has become caste ridden and morality has become caste bound. There is no sympathy to the deserving. There is no appreciation of the meritorious. There is no charity to the needy. There is no charity but it begins with caste and ends with caste. There is sympathy but not for other caste.

(37)

Mulk Raj Anand being a humanist wrote for the sake of life. He did not consider literature just as a means for entertainment but took it as a tool for social reform. As he asserts “The writer must go straight to the heart of the problem of our time, the problem of Human Sensitivity in present complex, the tragedy of modern man” (Naik, *Mulk Raj Anand* 15).

In the ‘Preface’ to *Two Leaves and a Bud* Anand says:

The world I know best was the microcosm of the outcaste and peasants and soldiers and working people. Insofar, however as my work broke new ground and represented departure from the tradition of previous Indian Fiction, where the pariahs and the bottom-dogs hadn’t been allowed to enter the sacred precincts of the novel, in all their reality, it seemed to become significant and drew the attention of the critics, particularly in Europe which only know Omar Khayam, Li Po and Tagore but very little or nothing about sordid or colorful lives of the millions of Asia.

Anand's world of writing is a world designed around the objectives of social welfare and human concern. It is a world that mirrors the real problems of marginalized human beings and their situations.

4.6 Anand's Idea of Salvation and Untouchability: Being a writer with social mission, Mulk Raj Anand believes neither in religion, nor in politics but in the reformation of human world. He was a Marxist writer and he like other writers of nineteen thirties, who were influenced by Marxism and discussed the issues of marginalized, underprivileged and suppressed sections of Indian society as their subjects; in his very first novel *Untouchable*, he selected the most neglected section of society. As a great admirer and follower of humanism he realistically drew the picture of that class and wanted to create a consciousness in society towards the miserable plight of untouchables and aimed to reform their condition. For the salvation of untouchables, Anand has given three solutions in his novel *Untouchable*: Gandhism, Christian missionary and flush system. But the most important thing that he focused on is the creation of consciousness among people and desired all the people to act for the same.

4.6.1 Gandhism in *Untouchable*: Gandhian philosophy for the eradication of untouchability is one of the three solutions given by Anand in *Untouchable*. For Mahatma Gandhi untouchability was a matter of great concern. He was devoted to eradicate this evil from society and considered it 'as the greatest blot on Hinduism'. He found himself associated with 'Harijans', the children of God and asked high caste Hindus to treat them with due respect. As a reformer he believed that without its eradication society cannot change and progress. He was of the opinion that every person must follow the duty assigned to him by God. If a person is a sweeper he must

do his work honestly and with a great zeal and others should not consider him menial or polluted; because by sweeping and cleansing the dirt he is doing the noblest job. He also said that if the untouchables want to get respected and treated well they must leave the unhygienic habits since their unhygienic habits they are mistreated. They must not accept the remains from the plates of upper caste Hindus. They should take grain and only good grain. Anand put these ideas of Gandhi in *Untouchable* in the following words:

In order to emancipate themselves they have to purify themselves. They have to rid themselves of evil habits, like drinking liquor and eating carrion. They should now cease to accept leavings from the plates of high-caste Hindus, however clean they may be represented to be. They should receive grain only--good, sound grain, not rotten grain—and that too, only if it is courteously offered. If they are able to do all that I have asked them to do, they will secure their emancipation. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 121)

Gandhi was so much concerned with the emancipation of Dalits in Indian society that he even wished if to be reborn, he should be born as a Dalit:

I do want to attain spiritual deliverance. I do not want to be reborn. But if I have to be reborn, I should wish to be reborn as an Untouchable, so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings and the affronts leveled at them, in order that I may endeavor to free myself and them from their miserable condition. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 120)

Gandhi in his speech also added that “all public wells, temples, roads, schools, sanatoriums, must be declared open to the Untouchables” (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 121). Abolition of untouchability was a matter of grave concern for Gandhi but he was against the idea of a legal separate status for untouchables from the Hindus which was awarded by the British Government of India and went on fast until death. To him separation was not the solution to the problem of untouchability. Gandhi considered *Sawraj* and eradication of untouchability as the two sides of one coin. Anand dealing with the speech of Gandhi in his novel mentions this. He says:

I have emerged from an ordeal of a penance, undertaken for a cause which is as dear to me as life itself. The British Government sought to pursue a policy of divide and rule in giving to our brethren of the depressed classes separate electorates in the Councils that will be created under the new constitution. I do not believe that the bureaucracy is sincere in its efforts to elaborate the new constitution. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 118)

As it is highlighted by Anand, Gandhi’s movement against effects the British rule in India was also ready to tackle the problems of social categorization, which was an aftermath of ‘divide and rule policy’.

4.6.2 Anand’s Untouchables and Conversion to Christianity: Conversion to Christianity is one of the three solutions suggested in the novel by Anand for the emancipation of untouchables. An untouchable can convert to Christianity as Jesus Christ sees all human beings equal. There is no caste system. There is no concept of being polluted by birth. But the salvation offered by Colonel Hutchinson, a Christian missionary, to Bakha was very confusing as the missionary found it difficult to

answer Bakha's questions. Who Christ is? Why he sacrificed himself for the salvation of others? How He (God) have a son? And why did His son die that we should be forgiven? Forgiven for what? Why we all are born sinners. As I remember I did not commit any sin. So for what I should be forgiven. But one thing struck and touched Bakha's heart that 'Yessuh Messih' makes no difference between the Brahmins and Bhangis. In the eyes of Jesus, we are all alike. Hutchinson's persuasion of Bakha for conversion by recitation of devotional songs did not create any effect on him rather he felt bored because he could not understand the meaning of the songs. There are some dialogues between Hutchinson and Bakha:

Hutchinson: We must confess our sins. Then alone will He forgive us, otherwise we will have to suffer the eternal torment of hell. You confess your sins to me before I convert you to Christianity.

Bakha: But, Huzoor, I don't know who Yessuh Messih is. I Know Ram. But I don't know Yessuh Messih.

Hutchinson: 'Ram is the god of the idolaters', the Colonel said after a pause, and a bit absent-mindedly. 'Come and confess your sins to me and Yessuh Messih will receive you in Heaven when you die.'
(*Omnibus, Untouchable* 106)

Bakha was utterly bored, more confused and afraid of the thought of conversion. Because he did not understand much of what the Colonel said. And he disliked the idea of being called sinner. As he remembers, he had not committed any sin. So why should he confess for uncommitted sin. All these talks were going on when they were on the way towards missionary's house attached to girja ghar

(church). When they reached in the compound, Bakha, after analyzing the mood of memsahib decided to escape, as he was in search for a chance to run away. There were too many questions in Bakha's mind and the idea of conversion was unable to answer most of them.

4.6.3 Upliftment of Untouchable through the Introduction of New Technology:

Bakha is depressed but not hopeless in his life as his thoughts about the sorrowful phase of his life, activates his will to fight against this oppression. He will not let himself moved by the wind. He is looking out for a solution. He is not an easy food for any false politician or orator or evangelist. Out of the three alternatives proposed for the removal of untouchability, he is not fascinated by the Christian preacher, attracted a little to Gandhi's charismatic personality but captivated by the third alternative that promises immediate liberation from the filthy and despicable work done by the untouchables.

When the sweepers change their profession, they will no longer remain Untouchable. And they can do that soon, for the first thing we will do when we accept the machine will be to introduce the machine which clears dung without anyone having to handle it---the flush system. Then the sweepers can be free from the stigma of untouchability and assume the dignity of status that is their right as useful members of a casteless and classless society. (*Omnibus, Untouchable* 127)

It can be said that after all Bakha too is a slave and a victim of his own meekness and therefore is not the subject of his own destiny. He is more active and does not become a passive victim of fate and of the system that annihilates him and

the likes of him. But one cannot fail to perceive that Bakha is a dying optimist and submits to the teachings of Gandhiji and the poet Iqbal Nath Sarashar. He is troubled by the hypocrisy of the world, he lives in. But he doesn't want to give up. He is confident enough and in hope for a better future if only Gandhi's idealism and the poet's much vaunted mechanisation and modernization could eventually remove the stigma and the social exclusion of the untouchables and rehabilitate them as equal citizens of India. He returns home at the end of the novel, not with a vacant mind of a pervasive feeling of hopelessness but with his mind and his whole being remembering the arresting words of the poet, a harbinger of good days. Bakha finds in the poet and to some extent in Gandhiji a surety of his own deep-seated yearning for liberation. And Anand has revealed in an unmistakable way his own preference for mechanisation as a way to achieve a socialist democracy. Anand portrays Bakha as a sweeper, untouchable with a difference. There are a few subtle artistic strokes by which Anand projects Bakha as a humble and intelligent boy who was discontented with his anonymous position. He wanted to better his position and was unhappy about his status that merited only contempt and ill-treatment from the caste people. He wanted to dress and live like the Tommies. All in all, Bakha lived in a world of fantasy and illusion. But in and through all this we catch a glimpse of Bakha's search for self as an individual and as a human. These comic and pathetic touches of the writer increase the sense of Bakha's consciousness as a simple untouchable.

4.7 Summing up: Thus we can say that Bakha is a representative of all marginalized communities, as the people of these communities are deprived of fundamental rights and respectable life. The main theme of the novel inspires the reader to sympathise with these communities and participate in the abolishment of casteism.

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Chapter –5

**DALIT CONSCIOUSNESS IN MULK
RAJ ANAND'S *COOLIE***

Chapter – 5

DALIT CONSCIOUSNESS IN MULK RAJ ANAND'S *COOLIE*

5.0 Introductory: In the present chapter there is a detailed discussion on the issues of Dalit consciousness and the way these issues are handled by Anand in his *Coolie*.

5.1 Introduction to the Novel: Anand's *Coolie* is a novel that outlines the problems and sufferings of an individual living in the hierarchical society of India. In this novel we can see how Anand's writings are focused on the idea of social responsibility and on the lives of individuals disturbed by the social systematic order. In search of livelihood, Munoo, the protagonist of *Coolie* leaves his hometown Bilaspur for Shamnagar. He goes from Shamnagar to Daulatpur, from Daulatpur to Bombay and eventually gets accident with the car of Mrs. Mainwaring who brings him to Simla and keeps him as a domestic help. In the novel Anand portrays the character of Munoo, a kshatriya unlike Bakha in *Untouchable*. Anand wants to show that it is not only untouchable who is victim of society but all the persons who are poverty stricken are the victims of society and Anand is presenting this through the character of Munoo in his second novel *Coolie*. Throughout the novel Anand depicts the miseries and sufferings of the protagonist. Anand's hero suffers at the hands of various sections of society. Sometimes he suffers due to the caste, class and sometimes due to the capitalism, industrialism and communalism. His exploitation covers physical as well as psychological. Even at the age of just eighteen he becomes the victim of sexual exploitation at the hands of Anglo-Indian lady Mrs. Mainwaring and finally dies of consumption. H. U. Khan, a critic expresses his view about the novel *Coolie* that:

Coolie is an 'epic of misery'. The hero of the novel, Munoo is an archetypal figure, a true representative of toiling, suffering, starving millions of India. Through him, Mulk Raj Anand has focused attention on the wretched plight of the teeming millions of India, who are exploited at all hands, are made to work hard, hardly get two square meals a day, grow sick and exhausted and die prematurely. (Bhatnagar, *Indian Writing in English* 4. 195)

Another critic Hari Om Prasad talks about the fame of *Coolie* in the following words:

...*Coolie* is the epic of the poor in India that provides many pieces of information and items...Its appeal is so much innate, humane, potential and wide extensive that has designed it purposive to be translated into more than 38 languages of the world. It has earned for Anand a global reputation as one of the prolific and prominent English novelists. (Bhatnagar, *Indian Writing in English* 9. 41)

Berry Margaret says, "Anand" attacks, on political as well as social and economic institutions, are carried out mainly on behalf of India's poor, in the effort to destroy forces inimical to their development, and to build a world of freedom and equality where human potential can flourish" (72). And he further comments, "A direct and detailed presentation of the socialist programme first appears in the *Coolie*" (65).

According to Saros Cowasjee, "In Anglo- Indian Fiction, *Coolie* is perhaps the first novel to touch on this subject, and it foreshadows the murderous riots that followed the partitioning of India in 1947" (79).

Munoo, the central character of this novel, displays the uncompromising condition of an orphan who struggles for his daily livelihood, desires nothing more than a piece of bread and reaches to matured phase of his troubled destiny. Anand gives the description of the place where Munoo, his uncle Daya Ram and his aunt Gujri live:

Munoo, ohc Munooa, oh Mundu! Shouted Gujri from the veranda of a squat, sequested, little mud hut, thatched with straw, which stood upon the edge of a hill about a hundred yards away from the village in the valley. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 131)

In the very beginning of the novel there is an indication of Munoo's tragic destiny as Munoo was aware of his sufferings to come. The novelist says:

For, though Munoo was young he had more than a vague idea of how Jay Singh's father was responsible for his impending misfortunes. He had heard of how the landlord had seized his father's five acres of land...And he knew his father had died a slow death..." (*Omnibus, Coolie* 132-33)

Munoo's life puts him in a chain of troubles as a servant in middle-class family, as a worker in pickle factory, as a cotton mill worker in Bombay, and a rickshaw-puller in Simla.

Munoo was from a poor family, and his parents left him as an immature child in the hands of his aunt. Munoo is abused, beaten and exploited by his Uncle Daya Ram and by Babu Nathoo Ram when he becomes a servant in his house for five

rupees a month. The writer shows how the real exploitation of Munoo starts from his own family at the hands of his Uncle, when he abuses him:

Ohe, illegally begotten! You will get killed! Idiot! A tirade of abuse descended on him from his uncle, who had rushed back.

Walk quickly, rascal! You will get killed before long if you don't look out! His uncle shouted, and struck him on the face. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 138)

According to Anand, it is not simply religion or caste but the ideas or principles of class that affect. They all torture the poor. Munoo, an orphan, naïve hill boy is forced to move from place to place against his desires to earn his livelihood. His father dies in the space of feudal exploitation and mother of poverty and hunger. Munoo faces domestic torture at the hands of his uncle and aunt. When Munoo asks his uncle about the accounts to buy some food from the market, he gets beaten and thrown out:

You impertinent little rogue!' raved Daya Ram as he sprang up and collared Munoo. So you dare to ask me for accounts, eh, son of a swine! This is the reward I get for keeping you so long, and for finding you a job! Money! Money, money you want all the time!'

And he shook the boy roughly and struck him blow after blow in the ribs.

Oh, don't beat me, please don't beat me, uncle,' cried Munoo. I only want food. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 176)

His uncle and aunt find their nephew, fourteen year old boy, old enough not only to earn his own living but also to support his uncle, who works as a 'peon' at the banks in Shamnagar. They send him as a servant in the middle class family of Nathoo Ram. Here he is dragged over the coals by master's wife. But when he goes back to his uncle and tells about his pitiless life at Nathoo Ram's place, his uncle shouts at him again:

And here you come complaining about the treatment you get at the house of our noble Babuji. You go and stick it, if you value your life, or I will kill you! Leave off that reading habit of yours and lazing, swine! And now get back and ask Bibiji to give you some food. I have neither sympathy nor food for you! And he picked up the boy and threw him out. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 177)

Babu Nathoo Ram's wife Bibi Uttam Kaur treats him as a low class animal and other family members take him as a monkey; an object of amusement. In one of such amusing episodes performing like a monkey he bites the daughter of his master. Nathoo Ram, the master takes it as a derogatory assault on his family and beats him mercilessly. And when Munoo is performing as a monkey for his masters' amusement, he is reminded of his position as a servant:

Munoo wanted to join them. So he pushed in and began to perform the morning's monkey dance. This amused them and they let him play with them, though they had begun by pushing him away, saying, 'You are a servant, you must not play with us. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 163)

To Munoo, the ill-treatment of Bibi Uttam Kaur becomes unbearable. He runs away from there and while wandering in despair reaches railway station and boards a

train with no definite destination to go. In the train he happens to meet Prabha Dayal, an owner of the pickle factory who feels pity for him and brings him to his home. Munoo knows about the money politics but he is never after money. He finds himself regularly under the fear of losing his job. He becomes a victim of the immoral moneyed culture. Sandeep Kaur and Kailash in their article titled "Humanism in Mulk Raj Anand's novel with special reference to *Coolie*" have written that "*Coolie* is a sincere protest against the emergence of a new world of money and exploitation and class distinction. It shows how coolies like Munoo are completely beaten down by the curve of money power in the Iron Age" (180). Prabha, the owner of the pickle factory shares the similar kind of exploitation at his early age with Munoo. Prabha also had been a coolie earlier but due to his hard work he became an owner of a pickle factory at Daulatpur. Munoo is also a hard working labour but he needs something else to improve his standard of life. He is devoid of all kinds of shrewdness and trickery. He knows about the social discrimination in the early stages of his life. Luckily, Prabha's wife, the kind hearted woman, gives him love like his mother. But Ganpat, who is a partner of his master, beats all the workers mercilessly. Ganpat is like bad rogue who spends a lot of money on drinking and whoring. The Ganpat's treachery ruins Prabha Dayal and breaks him completely. He sells out his factory to repay the loan and debts. Munoo's service as a coolie is devoted to earn his living and also to help his master. Prabha's final move to leave Munoo alone is also sympathetic. While aimlessly walking to get a job, he reaches to the other part of city where everything looks fascinating because in this area the British people live and everything looks clean and in order. Suddenly Munoo hears a drum beating and some people announcing that today is the last show of circus, after that they will move to Bombay tonight. Munoo wants to watch the circus and goes ahead. He happens to meet a 'mahavat' (elephant

driver), who agrees to show him the show from a hole if he helps him in feeding the elephant and persuades him to go to Bombay and he also manages a place in the train. When train arrives at Bombay, the elephant driver shows him the way of exit. While walking on the road he happens to meet a mill worker, whose name is Hari Har, he finds a place to live and food to eat. A child of fourteen is compelled to work for a whole day on trivial wages.

Munoo's life also becomes problematic because of the head foreman, Jimmie Thomas, who is known as 'Chimta Sahib' among the labourers. Ratan is another worker, who saves Munoo from this head foreman's troubles by losing his job. There emerge strikes and protests for reappointing Ratan, but in place of giving him job again, the management issues a notice to the protesters and strikers for reducing their working hours. To mislead this protest and agitation the management officials spread the rumour that a Hindu child has been kidnapped by a Muslim. The workers filled with the communal hatred, participate in riots all over the city. Munoo's life is further traumatised in this situation and he finds it difficult to return to his home. In the morning he encounters an accident, when a car beats him on the road. Mrs. Mainwaring, the owner of the car takes him to Simla. Munoo starts recovering with the passage of time and starts working again as house servant and a rickshaw-puller for Mrs. Mainwaring. His health starts troubling him again. The disease is known to be tuberculosis that needs of all careful treatments, takes the life of Munoo, one day. In the novel, we can read a very pathetic description of Munoo as a rickshaw-puller:

Munoo had fever when he came back after his first day's work as a rickshaw coolie. He had felt his legs breaking with fatigue all the way back. When he got to his room he felt listless. His limbs sagged. He

stretched them, but there seemed no relief. He felt that his throat was parched. So he drank a jug of water. But his hands felt crippled and his legs seemed to sink beneath him. A complete inertia had taken possession of his bones. And the blood in his body was boiling hot. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 383)

Munoo's exploitation unendingly deteriorates his life. He pulls a rickshaw for Mrs. Mainwaring and works as a domestic servant, while his health is not with him:

He crouched by the fire in the kitchen and tried to ignore what he felt was only a little fatigue. His head was aching, however, and he felt like reclining on something.

He lay down on his back and curled up to receive the full glow of the fire, for he was now shivering. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 383)

5.2 Predicament of Marginalized Character: Anand's Munoo is a real life character and his life is not a happy go lucky life; it is very much possible for all of us to identify him with Bakha, Anand's masterpiece from the novel *Untouchable*. Munoo is a servant in the house of Babu Nathoo Ram and is a character who is being treated as dalit boy. When he tries to play with daughter of Babu Nathooram, he is criticised and scolded to a certain extent and reminded that he is a servant so he should not play with the children of his masters. He is also scolded by Babu Nathoo Ram's wife at kitchen doorstep and this ill treatment is harsh at the core.

Vay, shameless, shameless, vulgar, stupid hill-boy! May the vessel of your life never float in the sea of existence! May you die! What have you done? Why didn't you ask me where to go? May you fade away!

We didn't know we were taking on an animal in our employ, an utter brute, a savage! (*Omnibus, Coolie* 147)

In the above quoted words, he is scolded for a simple mistake that he couldn't find the latrine and relieved himself near the courtyard. In the same scene we can see the more humiliated life of this character as a servant, when Bibiji is not ready to let Munoo use their lavatory:

Ah, do you think I should let him use our lavatory!' Bibiji replied. Let this rustic use our lavatory! You spoil him. He will be another nuisance for me to look after. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 148)

His life has become hell and his existence is facing a lot of troubles for no reason. In the novel Munoo's uncle assures him of well treatment at the house of Babu Nathoo Ram, the master:

Come, ohe Munoo, he said, walking along. You will be looked after here. You will get plenty to eat in this home. And the Babu said he would pay us five rupees a month. I will show you my room near the office. Come down there on your day off. Don't forget to do your best for the masters. You are their servants and they are big people. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 144)

Anand has commented on the status of labourers in a country like India and has always been concerned with their problems. He also focuses on the interrelated pattern of caste oppression and class oppression, which is commonly visible in the stories of Mulk Raj Anand. When Munoo is taken away by Seth Prabha Dayal as a

factory worker, he eats well after a long time, on his arrival. It was possibly the death anniversary of Munoo's parents when he did feed well.

We can well observe that Munoo's life as a servant in the home of Babu Nathoo Ram is more that of a slave, his treatment reminds of the Dalit oppression at the hands of upper caste powerful people. Munoo is heavily marginalised and resides under the burden of oppression as he is ordered to bow his head or join his hands to give respect to the masters. In the case of dalit oppression we find the crushing of self-respect or in other words we can say that there is nothing like self respect for oppressed dalit, they are treated like non-living things. This same kind of oppression is visible in the slave treatment of Munoo, his self-respect has nothing to do with his existence. Bibiji's dialogues are good examples of upper class hypocrisy as those who consider themselves masters; they treat servants like non-living things:

Go and have a bath before you come anywhere near my kitchen,' she said, pushing him away with both her arms.

Be gone, out of my sight!' he heard her shout after him. Brute!

And she continued grumbling when he had long passed out of hearing distance:

I thought there was going to be some rest for me when this servant came. Instead I have to slave exactly as before. What is the use of an ignorant boy like this in the house? He is more of a trouble than a help. And such a stupid fool, too, and dirty! Ah! These village-folk!

Don't say anything against village folk,' mocked her brother in-law, you yourself come from a village.

Oh please don't tease,' said Bibiji. We must keep up our prestige. We must keep up appearances, at least before a stranger in the house. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 149)

In the house of Babu Nathoo Ram he is forced to work as long as possible and he is constantly raked over the coals; Baboo's whole family has an ill-attitude towards him except only one person Dr. Premchand, who is Baboo Nathoo Ram's younger brother. Seth Daya Ram's words are helpful in easing Munoo's pain 'You are their servant,' said Daya Ram. You must not mind what they say. You must grow up and work. You have had too easy a life at home' (*Omnibus, Coolie* 162).

Anand's observation and delineation is unmatched, when he writes about the social life of the oppressed individual characterised by caste or class impression. In this manner he relates his writings more to the novels of Charles Dickens, the famous Victorian novelist who makes a dexterous handling of the life of factory workers and slum dwellers. Anand is keen on describing the life of these types of marginalised characters and one thing which is quite interesting about his writing that he focuses on all kinds of marginalisation and unravels their similar patterns. Like, if a dalit boy is oppressed, his oppression would never be less than a boy who is oppressed on the grounds of class distinction.

Whether there were more rich or more poor people, there seemed to be only two kinds of people in the world. Caste did not matter. I am a kshatriya and I am poor, and Varma, a Brahmin, is a servant boy, a menial, because he is poor. No, caste does not matter. The babus are like the sahiblogs, and all servants look alike: there must only be two kinds of people in the world: the rich and the poor. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 184)

He has highlighted that Munoo, who belongs to the upper caste, is being treated like a slave just because he is not financially sound or he belongs to a poor class. It is much right to say that dalit oppression is not only caste oppression but also class oppression. This thing is also reflected in the dialogues of Munoo himself, when he says to himself that he is not an 'untouchable':

I should have fought hard if he had dared to turn me out or abused me,' he said to himself. 'I let him put me in my place as a coolie, but I was paying for the soda water and I am not an untouchable. I am a Hindu Kshatriya, a Rajput, a warrior. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 282)

It is the difference between poor and rich that again defines a large number of persons as dalits. Though Munoo is kshatriya, his life is similarly painful to the dalit and this pain is also visible in his own dialogues when he says that 'all servants look alike...'.

5.3 A Victim of Labour: Munoo's life is a pathetic one, which is also reflected by his own dialogues as he finds his destiny full of sufferings. In this novel the situation is more similar to some short stories written by Munshi Premchand, who has well described the sad situation of peasants and dalits of pre-independent India. In this novel too, we have a main situation in which a peasant without land is unable to find the happiness. Munoo becomes a victim of exploitation instead of having an undisturbed life. What is Munoo's identity? Nothing but a victim of labour. In the words of Munoo's master, his status is pathetic:

Had you no shame! No respect! Spoiler of my salt! Didn't I ask you to leave my children alone and not to play with them! What is your status

that you should mix with the children of your superiors? How did we know we were taking in a snake in our house, who would turn treacherous after we had fed him with milk? Let that uncle of yours, Daya Ram, come! Disobedient wretch. Didn't I tell you that my children are not your class! You, you were born I don't know on what rubbish-heap! Think of our reputation! Our prestige! We looked after you when you broke our skull playing with that Brahmin boy. I was sorry for you. Now we'll have to hand you over to the police....'

(Omnibus, Coolie 186)

There are some moments in the novel where we can find Munoo with a kind friend like Hari and Prabha Dayal's wife but the role of suffering and problems in his life is present throughout the novel. The novel has touched all possible social aspects in a society like India and has given space to all classes like landless peasants, factory labourers, middle class masters and British officers to reveal the various imbalances available in the society.

In *Coolie* we see the young hero Munoo forced out of his home in a hill village and sent to find his way through a number of menial jobs in an extraordinary series of locations throughout India. While working as a servant for a bank official, in a pickle factory, in a cotton mill, or as a rickshaw boy, before his death at fifteen from consumption, Munoo encounters the entire social fabric of India. (Berman 470)

Munoo is a character who gets trapped in the net of these imbalances. The novel defines the experiences of Kangra hills, Punjab hills and the life in Bombay.

There are some scenes in the novel which are pathetic like the one in which Munoo with his friend Hari spends a night on Bombay pavement and their experience with the local rustics. The scenes of the factory are also full of sorrow as we see that Munoo and other coolies are working in a condition more like the dalits in an Indian village. They do not get proper wages and live in a place which is full of dirt and filthy things.

There are passages in the novel where the author again and again talks about the hierarchical divisions in the society. The speech delivered by the red flag union reflects Anand's vision regarding the social division and exploitation which believes that this whole world is a place where rich exploits the poor and takes benefit of their gentle and meek nature. But in a society like India the dalit-like exploitation emerges in multiple forms, characters like Munoo live under the various layers of differences and these layers are economic, communal, political caste-based and even sexual. Munoo's ill-treatment by his uncle provides a real. In Munoo's factory the owners play the card of communal politics to create differences among the factory workers to keep them away from the trade union. So, we can see that capitalism is also exploiting in the name of community differences. Munoo has always been a victim of all kinds of marginalisation available in the society. When he escapes to the Malabar hills, he accidentally meets an Anglo-Indian lady named Mrs. Mainwaring. Munoo then reaches to Simla as a servant of Mrs. Mainwaring and performs a number of acts in her service. Mrs. Mainwaring, who is really a woman of shabby nature, keeps him as a servant to pull up rickshaw for her. In Simla she also exploits Munoo sexually and Anand has indicated this at various places in the novel. While describing Mrs Mainwaring Anand says, "Her warmth, her ardour, her intense capacity for desire

must have been due to the blood of her pagan Indian grandmother in her curious coldness of mind, the frigidity which had once made her jump in to a bath of ice water in order to quell the passion on her body, was conditioned by the idea of sin” (Anand, *Coolie* 374). Mrs Mainwaring also arouses Munoo’s passion and uses him as her husband. She utters:

Why didn’t the world understand how a woman gives herself in love, in hate, in pity, in tenderness, in playfulness and in a hundred different moods?...Then she looked at him with flutter in her eyes...Beautiful boy, Lovely Boy. You only want a wife now. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 379-380)

The physical and sexual exploitation of Munoo is so harsh that he falls as a weak patient of tuberculosis. Anand’s charm of writings lies in his delineation of character of Munoo, who is innocent and full of compassion and has an interest in life but his life is interested in something else. He is like a number of Indian who is living away from all the privileges and actually are not able to fulfil their basic needs. The exploitation of these characters has multiple roles to play. They are punished for their daily bread and they are bound to stay at the lowest level of society. Such type of characters has no life to succeed in their life time but a system of hierarchy where their victimisation will set their identity.

Munoo’s humiliation is really emotional at Daulatpur, where he works in pickle factory:

Thus they worked from day to day in the dark underworld, full of the intense heat of blazing furnaces and the dense malodorous smells of

brewing essences, spices and treacle, of dust and ashes and mud, which became kneaded into a sticky layer on the earth of the passage with the overflow of water from the barrels of soaking fruit, and plastered the bare toes of the labourers. They ran about bare-foot and naked except for loincloths, emptying the boiling water which hummed ceaselessly in the cauldrons, refilling them, joining the receptacles to tin tubes with smears of sticky clay and rags; cooling the flasks; transporting them; then coming back to wash the fruit; doling it out to the women and helping them to peel it, till the next flasks of essences were ready; drawing water out of the well or helping the bosses in the intricate business of making jams and pickles. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 219)

5.4 Death or the End of Tragedy: Munoo is a subaltern character who is marginalised at every stage of society. He is on margins for being economically weak and socially unfit. Munoo's death is not a tragedy but a relaxation to his life. Anand has outlined in this novel that there are a number of persons living in a country like India and they do a number of menial jobs to earn their daily bread. They are actually exploited while doing their jobs and a certain section of society performs the role of masters to snatch their spirit of life. Anand is striking the mind of all the human beings to make them aware about such kind of exploitation. Anand had a vision of classless society for being a Marxist at the root and in this novel he portrays a society which is actually based on the idea of competition not brotherhood or love. The human beings are divided between two major classes the rich and the poor and both of them are in situation of trouble. In such kind of environment a character like Munoo is so disturbed that his identity is fully distorted, he has no name, no friends and has no idea about the place where he comes from.

Munoo's character in the novel is important in the presence of other characters like Laxmi, Parbati, Mrs. Mainwaring, Daya Ram, Babu Nathoo Ram and others. These characters actually highlight the situation in which Munoo's life really becomes social. These characters have different attitudes and behaviours as some of them feel compassion and others behave like masters. Anand's *Coolie* is a clear depiction of the people belonging to the different sections in the social life like we can see the example of pavement dwellers, grain market coolies and cotton mill workers. The Dalit colour of Munoo and of other characters and situation in the novels has been clearly shown through the activities of characters and the use of language. In all characters, delineated by Mulk Raj Anand, we find an element of universalism with a peculiar and sensible touch of uniqueness.

The most significant argument in this novel is the dehumanized picture of industrial and capitalist society, which believes in the compartmental division of the rich and the poor:

There are only two kinds of people in the world: the rich and the poor,' Sauda continued, 'and between the two there is no connection. The rich and the powerful, the magnificent and the glorious, whose opulence is built on robbery and the theft and open warfare, are honoured and admired by the whole world, and by themselves. You, the poor and the humble, you, the meek and the gentle, wretches that you are, swindled out of your rights, and broken in body and soul, you are respected by no one, and you do not respect yourselves. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 355)

The orphan boy Munoo is actually a victim of a system of capitalistic human tendencies, which can be defined as a replacement of caste based system of hierarchy and labour. The existence of man has become a commodity and it is being treated like machines. Munoo's journey from the village Bilaspur near river Beas to the metropolitan city of Bombay and to the hill station Shimla, is all a graph representation of the struggling human existence. The protagonist of this novel submits before the decline phase of humanity, the loss of identity for those who are living on the margins. Anand's comment on the capitalist society is marvellously handled in this novel. This capitalist society, like the caste system, declares itself on the same mechanics of creating machine-like man and utilizing their time in more organized way. Munoo's uncle Daya Ram, who is a clerk in the Imperial Bank, is familiar with the idea of labour, master and capital; he considers his nephew like a machine that would bring him profit and money. This is the very first thought which initiates the conversion of Munoo into a dalit boy in the hands of capitalism and industrialism. Munoo's desires are thwarted away and his dreams are perished by the vertical trap of organized distribution of human beings as slaves. The sense of freedom is unknown to him except some instances where he is not under the eyes of his masters or guardians. The absence of freedom is also clearly available in the life of Dalits, who are compelled to live and work in designed prisons. Their prison are designed by the upper caste law makers and moneyed class people, who have faith in categorising them as slaves or accustom them as slaves.

5.5 Class-Based Society or Caste-Based Society: Munoo's tragic life is suggested from the ill treatment of human beings in the unending struggle between rich and poor classes and this struggle has overshadowed even the idea of casteism. In this novel the

readers get the chance of travelling to different places in India and come to know about the different sections of life including the rich, poor, urban and rural. There are many instances where one can encounter the various differences existing in the society at the level of language, habits and attitudes; and all these things have been used by Anand to depict the real life of India. This real life of India has many characters like Munoo and many situations like Munoo's situation, who falls a victim at the hands of purposeless materialistic world of class division. When Munoo is at his aunt's place he is grazing cattle on the banks of Beas River and living the life of a marginalised person, who is not able to receive happiness in life. He has lost his parent, and his aunt calls him an orphan in a very harsh tone and attitude. In the novel there is a boy in the village named Jay Singh, who is the son of the village landlord and a rival of Munoo, and he wants him to leave the village so that he would become the unopposed leader of the local boys. Jay Singh's treatment of Munoo is another example of the class conscious attitude, which depicts the Dalit-like patterns in Munoo's life. Jay Singh uses a lot of abusive words and compares Munoo with the animals like donkey for making him feel downtrodden. He cannot walk in the street by overlooking the bicycle of Jay Singh because that makes him angry. What can be the reason behind this ill treatment of Munoo at the hands of Jay Sing, a boy of his age and from the same village? This treatment and attitude is actually governed by the idea of social divisions that exist in our societies, where the one who is weak culturally, economically and politically is not allowed to live an undisturbed life in the main stream. Munoo was always tortured at the level of language and attitude as a low caste person. We can see the instances of his exploitation at the hands of his relatives, friends and master. It is not easily possible to understand the problems of a person, who belongs to the lower class of society and the exploitation he receives at the level

of language and thought. The abusive words and phrases like ‘brute’ and ‘cater of your master’, ‘spoiler of our salt’, standing for *namak haram* have been used to address Munoo because he is a victim of the master-slave relationship. He is humiliated, abused and slapped:

Vay, may you die, may you be broken, may you fade away, blind one!
Do you know what you have done? May the flesh of your dead body
rot in hell! With what evil star did you come to this house, that you do
everything wrong? That china cost us almost as much money as you
earn in a month.

Bibiji sprang from her seat near the kitchen and gave him a sharp, clean slap on the cheek. ‘Spoiler of our salt!’ she raved. You have brought bad luck to our house! Beast! And I have tried hard to correct you. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 174)

Once Munoo goes to a restaurant for a bottle of soda water, seeing the vacant seat sits there, the people around him see in contempt in such a way that waiter asks him to sit outside down. Munoo feels ashamed of having been intruded in the world of rich and leaves the restaurant in hurry by gulping the cold water as fast as he could. Anand expresses this in following lines:

The sharp cool sweetish taste of the soda water tingled in Munoo’s mouth and brought tears of acid into his eyes. He would have liked to

have sipped it slowly and enjoyed the full flavour of the drink in comfort. But he was nervous and feeling extremely guilty for having intruded into the rich man's world. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 282)

There is a scene in which Babu calls Munoo by the name of a bird 'Owl', whose name is tantamount to a fool in Indian culture and scolds him while he enters into the room. The name of owl is significantly a derogatory remark in India and Munoo is being targeted for his ugly look. Anand has delineated Munoo's character on his childhood friends, working in a pickle factory and who were living the life of socially marginalised real characters. Munoo is a representative of all the children, who live their life in the exploiting social class system. He can be called an example of child labour victimization in the hands of the exploitative capitalist space. In our society the bodies are victimised in the system of commerce and industries individual like Munoo internalise a certain kind of submissive stand towards their masters which can be seen as the serious result of Dalit like situation. See how Munoo is submissive towards his own ill-treatment at the hands of Nathoo Ram:

Playing, oh you were playing!" the Babu ground the words in his mouth. 'Dog!' And he slapped Munoo on the cheek with thin, bony hand and kicked him with his shiny black boots, the boots which had been the dream of Munoo's life. Forgive me, Babuji, forgive me!' shrilled Munoo, tottering to the floor.

'Forgive you!' Said Nathoo Ram. 'Yes, I will forgive you properly!'

And kicking the boy again, ferociously, he made towards the corner where a thick stick lay.

‘Oh Babuji forgive me, forgive, forgive!’ he screamed and squirmed, grovelling on the ground.

‘I will forgive you!’ the Babu hissed as he came sweating and struck him blow after blow. Munoo writhed with pain and groaned.

‘Oh Babuji, forgive, forgive, only forgive!’ he called.

‘Son of a dog!’ said the Babu, raising his stick again with a hard glint in his eyes.

‘Leave him now, the ungrateful wretch!’ said Biji.

‘Oh forgive, oh forgive, only forgive!’ Munoo moaned in the gathering darkness. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 187)

Munoo can also be defined as an example for all the coolies who fall the victims of industrialization. Munoo’s whole life seems to be a bad experience. Poverty, hunger and exploitation have been given to him by his parents. There are some characters like Prabha Dayal’s wife, who offer him a helping hand to make his life’s pain bearable and bring some moments of happiness into his life.

On his return Bibiji gave him two chapatis and a spoonful of lentils and vegetables. He had to eat with his hands, being considered too low in status to be allowed to eat off the utensils. The insult stung him. He could hardly swallow his food. (*Omnibus, Coolie* 162)

But there are also characters like Nathoo Ram’s wife Uttam Kaur, who couldn’t help herself from making Munoo’s life more troublesome. The life of Munoo

is clearly the story of every exploited and tortured individual of the social system and this life is told to portray the merciless life that keeps a relation with the lives of many people who are compelled to live a life of social hierarchy. Anand does not display in his hero any kind of rebellious attitude; he has a submissive tendency towards the capitalist exploitation. As a child, he is having no idea about the nature of exploitation and he was just accepting everything as natural order.

There are a lot of similarities between Bakha, from Anand's *Untouchable* and Munoo, as we can see that former is victimised for being a low cast person and the latter is being tortured for having a low cast status and an orphan. Anand's style is really marvellous when he gives the tool of abusive words, full of animal imagery and sexual activities, to those who exploit the beautiful life of a low class character Munoo. It is not possible for all of us to believe that a person like Munoo, who is not born a low caste character like Bakha, falls in the well of poverty, exploitation and cruelty. The writer has shown clearly that God can never be found responsible for such kind of exploitation but the social structures that make things more complex and unbearable.

Yet the brilliance of the novel is not in the specific details of the various trials that Munoo is made to face: rather as in *Untouchable*, it lies in the novel's focus on Munoo's internal life and his struggle to respond to the varieties of discourses that surround him and the power hierarchies associated with them. (Berman 470)

In *Coolie* we can find the real picture of social, cultural, economic and political results of the agrarian revolution that turned the feudal agrarian system into

the more intense phase of industrial capitalist system and these consequences are favouring the hierarchical structures of caste based society in a different manner. Anand is not only concerned with the presentation of merely a dark picture of a coolie in the capitalistic society but he also wants to arouse the conscience of humanity against the pitiless exploitation of the downtrodden and marginalised. This exploitation is well presented through the tragedy of Munoo and Anand dwells upon the sublime areas of human experience. Munoo's saga of miseries begins with the feudal exploitation.

Munoo faces a lot of domestic exploitation, as an orphan, at the hands of his aunt and uncle. He is further exploited by his master's wife and in the pickle factory; he becomes a victim of industrial exploitation. He is forced to work for eleven hours in a day on meagre wages. In the cotton mill he sees, with other workers, the capitalistic and colonial exploitation. He is also exploited in the name of religion in the time of the communal riots during his life in Bombay. The communal riot at the factory was actually one of the consequences of capitalist exploitation, because it was the trick of factory officials to flop the workers' strike. It is good example that portrays how the poor coolies and deprived persons are victimized. At the final phase of his life, he encounters physical as well as sexual exploitation by his master. His exploitation is actually manifold and the condition of his life in his formative years is worse in comparison to Dalit. Anand's characters have always been his spokesperson and they speak on behalf of his socialist and social ideas like in *Coolie*, there is a union leader Sauda to tell his views on the problems of the labourers. In *Coolie* when workers go on strike the communist leader Sauda says from the dais:

We are human beings and not soulless machines. We want the right to work without having to pay bribes.

We want clean houses to live in.

We want schools for our children and crèches for our babies.

We want to be skilled workers.

We want to be saved from the clutches of the moneylenders.

We want a good wage and no more subsistence allowance if we must go on short work.

We want shorter hours.

We want security so that the foreman cannot dismiss us suddenly.

(*Omnibus, Coolie* 356)

Anand highlights some genuine problems of the poverty-stricken labourers through his character. We can see one more example of Anand's view on the poor condition of coolies:

'You are the roofless, you are the riceless, spinners of cotton, weavers of thread, sweepers of dust and dirt; you are the workers, the labourers, the millions of unknown who crawl in and out of factories every day. You are the coolies. You are the miserable creatures who live twenty a room, in broken straw huts and stinking tenements. Your bones have no flesh, your souls have no life, you are clothed in tattered rags. And yet my friend Onkar Nath says that your interests and the interests of mill owners are the same.' (*Omnibus, Coolie* 354-355)

He puts before the reader a Charter in which the expectations and demands of the workers from the owners of the factory are written. This charter is a small manifesto of social problems that comes from Anand's social vision. The Charter underlines that the workers are actually not machines but human beings. They should be saved from the hold of the moneylenders. But the aftermath of this charter is something else. The labourers are appointed on commission. They are offered such huts to live in which they do not have even basic amenities. They are devoid of even proper water. The interest rates are increased enough to eat their wages. Anand has penned his anger against such kind of capitalist exploitation. Anand further marks his anger against the administration by highlighting the incident of Seth Prabha's arrest and the ill-treatment given to him. He is arrested without issuing any warrant and gets tortured by the police, to make admit the crime that he has not committed. This brutal treatment is enough to break him both physically and mentally.

5.6 Summing up: Thus we can say in the light of Mulk Raj Anand's *Coolie* that the marginalization of a character is not always due to caste division but in some cases the financial reasons are also responsible for treating a person as Dalit. Munoo is not a Dalit by birth but his financial condition and parental background put him in the condition of slave and makes him feel like a Dalit. Therefore, we can also say that Dalit consciousness favours the plight of all marginalized characters.

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Chapter –6

**DALIT CONSCIOUSNESS IN MULK RAJ
ANAND'S *TWO LEAVES AND A BUD***

Chapter – 6

DALIT CONSCIOUSNESS IN MULK RAJ ANAND'S *TWO LEAVES AND A BUD*

6.0 Introductory: In the present chapter the researcher is going to identify the elements of Dalit consciousness in Anand's *Two Leaves and a Bud*. This novel is an account of peasants' struggling and it discusses many episodes where Anand's Marxism goes parallel to the idea of Dalit consciousness. It can be said that Anand has added some elements of Marxism to the notion of Dalit consciousness. Anand is one of those novelists who interpolated Marxist ideas in the depiction of the problems of marginalized communities.

6.1 Introduction to the Novel: Mulk Raj Anand's *Two Leaves and a Bud* is designed on the historical account of the imperial exploitation uninterrupted by the British in the early period of their control. The intelligibility of the novelist is matchless in the interlocking of reality and its presentation in writing. Anand's techniques are smart enough in finding the irresolute and undecided scenes of reality and making them completely apparent for his readers. In the preface to the second edition of *Two Leaves and a Bud* Anand recalls: "What I have to say in it was deep in me from the days when I lived for a while near a plantation in Assam and visited Ceylon and saw the inhumanity and barbarism prevalent there with the consequent dehumanization of the colonials involved in the process..... I would say that the descriptions in *Two Leaves and a Bud* are comparative under estimates. Only the decent Englishmen at home will not easily believe that their representatives in the empire could be guilty of such excesses as are familiar to most of the subject races". The name of this novel is suggested by a line that coolies used to sing while they would work on tea plantation. The title of the novel is catchy and suggestive. However, the workers find a tilt and

swing in it; it unfolds some discussion on the wearisome routine of the work. They used to chant it for relaxation, though it explained their monotonous slavish life in pathetic conditions. The novel is set in one of the tea-estates, a plot of colonial exploitation in the British Empire situated on Assam hills in the northeast India. The main conflict and issues emerge on the tea- estate and the protagonist Gangu who comes from a small village near Amritsar, travels from Punjab to Assam, where his life various entanglement. He is forced to leave his native place due to the problems arising after the loan his brother had taken on account of their ancestral land and the house, from the money- lender. The tea estate agent Buta Singh guides him to the tea estate by explaining an imaginary scene for the future. Buta Singh tries to persuade him by making false promises:

If anyone needs money for something special such as the purchase of a cow, for marriage or for the propitiation of the ancestors' ceremony, the sahibs advance it free of interest, and recover it only gradually. The Manager Sahib knows and cares for all his people. He attends to their well-being, and he keeps them happy and contented. The Manager Sahib and the Assistant Manager Sahib are very fond of us folk, and advise and assist us in our marriages and in our thousand-and-one family affairs. Besides, they hold sports and distribute prizes every now and then. There is a real affection between the labourers and the sahibs, believe me, and we all turn to them for help and advice even in the most intimate matters. (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 5)

And how he make him believe, and assures Leila's marriage is worth seeing. He says: "Believe me. Don't call me by the name of Buta if they don't do well by

you, call me a dog instead” (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 7-8). For the assurance of Leila’s marriage he utters: “I am not the son of Tota Ram, the Chaudri of barbers, if I can’t arrange a match for that beautiful girl” (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 8).

On the tea estate John De-La-Havre, the doctor visits the house of the planter Charles-Croft Cooke. He talks ironically about the British rule in India and expresses his view that the British should allow the Indians to run their own country. Gangu and his family are given a small hut to reside in. Gangu opines about the hut, “This tin box was not so desirable, as it would be too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter” (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 34). They start working under the guidance of Reggie Hunt, the assistant planter, an embodiment of evil and lust. Narian, a coolie, tells Gangu that this sahib is obsessed with lust and has no respect for anybody’s mother or sister. After a week while going to the Bazaar, Gangu realizes that they are paid less in comparison what he used to get alone by working on the fields at his village. He says:

What had the family got after almost a whole week’s work? It did not even work out at eight annas a day for the whole family: three annas for him, two annas for his wife and daughter, and three pice for his child. Why, in the village he had been able to earn eight annas a day alone by working in the landlord’s land when he had lost his own! (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 64)

He disapproves the white for exploiting and badly treating the poor villagers. Even at the Bazaar the farmers are forced to sell their products at cheap rates and buy the essential commodities on high rates. It is the exact background for a systematic

socialist revolution. One day, when Gangu comes back to his home with high fever, his wife Sajani, a highly critical and demanding village woman whose whole life had been devoted to cleaning and washing, takes care of him. But this woman who takes care of her husband, herself gets infected and dies, when the epidemic of malaria spreads. The families and the British officers meet in the club to talk about the epidemic. Doctor Havre comes with Doctor Chunni Lal to the club. Reggie Hunt insults him for his being a black doctor and orders the bearer to turn him out. Reggie Hunt represents the racial superiority of the White. Other English officers Ralf, Hitchcock and Tweetie support him. Gangu goes to Burra Sahib (Croft) to borrow money for the funeral of his wife. But as he reaches to the palace he is forced to go back in the fear of the spread of disease, Gangu leaves without money. Let us see how he is forced to go back by Croft Cooke, "Get out! Get out!" exclaimed Croft Cooke, turning purple with rage, and kicking at the coolie. 'You bloody fool, get out! Get out! You have been spreading infection all over the place! Didn't you know that you were under segregation! By whose order did you come here?' (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud*, 1954 105). In return he goes to Sardar Buta but instead of getting money, he is suggested to meet the bania in the market. Finally Gangu borrows money from the bania and completes the funeral process of his wife. Reggie Hunt keeps the wife of Sardar Neogi, the supervisor, as his mistress and Chambeli, a dark woman and ex-mistress of Hunt, quarrels with the wife of Neogi. Reggie Hunt orders lathi-charge on the coolies, gathered to watch the fight show. Reggie Hunt comes on the spot and orders his supervisors to attack the coolies in a very inhuman way:

Strike them,' he yelled to the warders, 'Strike them.' And with his lips tight, and his head strung into a wooden hardness, he rode his horse

into the thick of the crowd, trampling on the men, women and children who pushed and grovelled and ran in utter confusion. The frightened mob screamed and wailed as they scrambled and rushed in frantic dismay, but he rode straight at them, filled with a wild urge to destroy. Then he pulled at the reins of his horse and raised both hands, 'Strike, strike,' he called again to the warders and galloped forward. (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 194-95)

And the supervisors beat the coolies so pitilessly that one among them dies and a number of others get seriously injured; this incident arouses all the coolies. Havre advises them to retaliate. Nevertheless, the angry but frightened group of coolies march towards the office with Gangu as their leader. But Reggie Hunt and Croft Cooke stop them on their way and force them to take their steps back. Gangu goes to his neighbour Narain to express his wish to return home. Narain makes him realize how impossible it is even to imagine about it. He convinces Gangu and others that they should settle there forever. He says:

This prison has no bars, but it is nevertheless an unbreakable jail. The chowkidars keep guard over the plantation, and they bring you back if you should go. The other day the chowkidar beat Balkrishnan, the boy who fled to the Santal village, because he thought he could escape to his mother in Oudh. The chowkidars go round at night with a lamp and open every door to see if we are all at home. There used to be a roll call every night before I came. (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 38)

Croft Cooke is perturbed by the unrest among the coolies; therefore, he sends the message to the officers to keep control over the coolies. The arrival of the plane

disturbs the agitators and they run here and there to save themselves from the possible air attack. The doctor comes to help them but realizes that the revolt has been crushed so he decides to leave India. The coolies settle down and Gangu is fined for the agitation. Gangu has to accept this fine as a slave. His economic condition worsens with the interest he has to pay to the Bania. The life becomes miserable to him. Reggie Hunt tries to approach Gangu's daughter Leila in the tea garden. She shrieks and runs back to her hut. Hunt follows her and calls her out. When the neighbours gather he gets nervous and shoots his revolver in the air. Gangu rushes to the spot and gets killed by Hunt who shoots him point blank. He is charged with the murder of Gangu. The trial takes place before a nine-man-jury out of whom seven are British. Hunt is not found guilty due to the lack of evidences and witnesses.

M. C. Shubhashini in his article "Realistic Portrayal in Mulk Raj Anand's Fiction", has expressed that: "the novel is poetic, brutal and realistic. It is full of satire against the British capitalism. It presents the theme of exploitation of the underprivileged with greater concentration. Gangu is a victim of capitalism. He comes to the plantation to start a new life, but he loses his life. Gangu is one of the most complete and memorable portraits of Indian peasants in Anand's fiction. Gangu is an authentic character since he presents all those bafflingly contrasting strain, which marked the pre-Independence Indian peasant characters" (2).

It becomes very clear that Anand's works are for the cause of that section of society, which is insulted, injured and exploited. These marginalized people suffer due to the old age traditions and socio-economic barriers of caste, class, race and sex. Anand closely observed the society and its problems and aimed of integrating them to the mainstream of society. To quote Iyengar:

He wrote of pariahs and the bottom dogs rather than of the elect and the sophisticated. He ventured into territory that had been largely ignored till then by Indian writers. For all their nationalistic fervor, Bankim Chandra's novels were but romances... Tagore was chiefly interested in the upper and middle classes, Premchand chose his themes from the peasantry and humble folk of U.P. none of them cared to produce realistic or naturalistic fiction after the manner of a Balzac or Zola. (333)

This novel describes the problems of hierarchical structure in the society, which is shared between ruled and ruler and gives the impression of problems similar to Dalit conditioning. Violence and sexual exploitation are some of the results and human beings are eternally clutched in a slave world. Anand gives a description of coolies' houses in Assam and these residing places express the scene of exploitation:

The coolies' lines were on the edge of the stream, almost in the basin of the valley, rising in terraces tier by tier over the flooded fields of rice attached to them, and leading to a slope of twenty thousand acres beyond, which constituted the bulk of the other five estates with their population of eleven thousand. (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 17-18)

6.2 Colonial Exploitation as a Central Theme of the Novel: The central theme of the novel is colonial exploitation. Anand portrays two types of characters, the rulers and the ruled. In the former group we have British characters while in the latter Indian characters. Most of the rulers are exploiter. Most of the planters are cruel hearted businessmen. Most of the characters are lifelike but somehow the British persons

represented here are not as similar to reality as are the Indian. Most of the English characters are weak and due to the absence of psychological insight into the Indian characters they are also not so arrestingly projected. The British characters are always aware about their authority and racial superiority. The Indian characters, on the contrary suffer passively because of their weak positions. They submit before the exploitation by their rulers in order to keep themselves away from hunger. The central character Gangu is a middle aged person who is a representative symbol of all those coolies belonging the early phase of the British colonialism. As a victim of the feudal exploitation in the hands of the landlord at his native place, Gangu enters into the valley of Assam. Here he becomes the victim of the colonial and capitalistic exploitation. Ill-paid and ill-fed, he is forced to live in unhealthy and unhygienic conditions. Though he knows that the 'Sahukar' has been the bone of contention in the village, he had no other option but to go for the same mistake. Like most of the coolies and peasants, Gangu too believes in superstitions. He takes his exploitation as one more reward for the deeds committed in the past life. But when the exploitations of all kinds get tough on his soul, he finds difficulty in keeping up with his faith. We see a tragic flaw in the character of Gangu, who is the hero of the novel. A theist peasant suddenly becomes an atheist and starts denying the presence of god. In the pessimistic words of Gangu, Anand shows how the strong impact of the colonial exploitation crushes a man's faith in god. G. L. Gautam in his article 'Post-colonial Discourse in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Anand's *Two Leaves and a Bud*' says:

Anand in *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud* attacked respectively the callous class system and colonialism, especially in *Two Leaves and a Bud*, he attacked, to use Edward W. Said phrase, 'colonial culture'. By

publishing his early novels in England obviously for Western public, he aimed to show them how headless violence, ruthless suppression and naked exploitation was carried out in the British Indian colony, like its counterparts across the world under the veneer of so-called advanced culture which the English colonial system professed to represent. (Khan, *Legacies* 117)

Though Gangu is the protagonist, he is not rebellious but submissive. This is another feature of Dalit conditioning, in which the characters accept their situation submissively. At the end of the novel, Gangu dies at the hands of the exploiter without committing any mistake and he is not responsible for his downfall. Though, he is the main character, he does not die the death of a hero. He on the other hand dies like one of the millions of coolies who die of poverty, hunger and exploitation and colonial violence or violence due to hierarchy. A sudden and obtrusive death of the hero creates disturbance in the minds of those, who go through the account of hero's life. The trial regarding the murder of the hero creates intense anger against the colonial, capitalist exploiters, which seems to be the very objective of the novelist. If Gangu represents the weakness of the ruled, Reggie Hunt, the assistant planter represents the racial authority of the ruler. He exploits the coolies regularly. He sees Indians as 'crawling black men diseased and rotten'. He seduces almost every woman in the tea estate area. His lust for woman leads him to become a murderer. A Jury of the British officers judge him not as guilty and free him to assist the British for racial and capitalistic exploitation of the Indians. However, John de-la-Havre, who is a spokesperson of the novelist, and a White by birth, he does not show any sign of racial superiority. He cannot tolerate the offensive nature of the colonial. We do not

find in him the cunningness, which was visible as the normal trait of the English blood. His compassion for the coolies is not superficial like that of the other. Here we can see how Havre talks about the coolie with Croft Cooke:

I am vague and humanitarian....but I see it as a doctor. I know that thousands of these coolies may be swept off by the parasites in those wells. And I feel conscience-stricken. It would be criminal not to do anything about it since I know the water supply is infected. And considering the company earns millions of pounds every year on their labour, it wouldn't be such a terrible loss for it to spend a lakh to save the coolies from perishing through gnats and pests.... (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 30-31)

His awareness of problems and exploitation of the coolies makes him rebel against the British exploitation. He shows his power to stand against his own people. He ironically says to his beloved Barbara that the tea they drink is a symbol of Indian exploitation, the way Indians follow the foreign culture. He does not hesitate to speak with his fellow officers in a critical manner. He is a stereotype character who represents the missionary intention of the novelist. When he realises his failure in protest, he submits before the punishment and leaves the tea estate forever. Charles-Croft Cooke, the planter can be called a symbol of capitalistic exploitation. In Indian characters Narain as a leader overshadows Gangu. Though he leads the coolies he knows how baseless their revolt against the ruler is.

The idea in Anand's earlier novels *Coolie* and of *Two Leaves and a Bud* is almost identical. By changing the scene of the colonial exploitation from the cotton

mill in Bombay to the tea plantation in Assam, by substituting the meek child Munoo with an experienced middle aged man Gangu, by replacing the foreman of the cotton mill to the assistant planter of the tea-estate, Anand succeeds in making the point that with a small difference in the quality and the quantity, the colonial and the capitalistic exploitation is more or less the same everywhere in India. The scene of colonial exploitation is similar to the world of social difference based on the idea of caste division. In fact the harassment of the coolies on the tea plantation is more troublesome than that of the cotton mills of the big cities. But again you can see the different set of social and economic practices which mark the difference among human beings and consequently their exploitation. So Anand is more aggressive and bitter while attacking on the inhuman practices of colonialism and capitalism in *Two Leaves and a Bud*. In both the novels Anand shows that the effects of capitalistic exploitation such as the class system have become more dominant than the caste system in the Indian society. The protagonists in both the novels are high caste Kshatriyas by birth, but even after such births they are socially and economically in the capitalistic system because both belong to the same class, that of 'the poor'. High caste Hindus pay respect to Sardar Buta who is by caste a barber. When the high caste people are financially weak, they are forced to bow before and obey their low caste powerful people.

6.3 Exploitation of Marginalized People: This novel is an example of how the capitalistic exploitation kills the life of the poor labourers in one of the tea-plantations in Assam. This novel can be called a working class novel as it concentrates the predicament of the poor labourers. It can also be called an example of the disastrous effects of the class system and colonial exploitation. Caste consciousness is also seen

in the novel. When Gangu offers sweet as a bribe to Shashi Bhushan, he says, “what good are your dirty sweets to me?”...‘Besides, I don’t know your caste! I want cash (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 112).

Exploitation in all its aspects is hence the major story line of the novel. The protagonist faces capitalistic, colonial, racial and physical exploitation in his life. Sexual exploitation of women is also a subject of discussion in the novel. The writer shows that the major cause for the exploitation of the working class is poverty and hunger. The capitalistic exploitation widens the gap between the rich and the poor. When the coolies worked on the Tea-estate they realized that they have houses to reside in but the houses resemble tin boxes which are like furnaces in the hot season and cold storages in the winter. They receive neither higher wages nor free allowances. They become slaves. A number of sardars keep surveillance on all the workers when they are at work. A number of watchmen keep watch on them when they are at rest. No worker is allowed to leave the tea-estate without permission. One of the coolies tells Gangu that he has been working on the tea plantation for the last twelve years but he has never been to see his relatives. On the other hand, according to the employers the peasants are living better lives as slaves on the plantation. The wages are ten times better than those of the peasants on the fields at their native places. However, the industrial profit is by millions of rupees through the tea plantations, the industrialist do not care for even the essential amenities for the workers. When Cholera spreads, the doctor confirms that last year it killed two hundred coolies. When the doctor requests the planters of the tea-estate to look after the water supply the planters turn a deaf ear and refuse to spend one or two lakhs on the employees because they are socially and financially inferiors and do not deserve

the benefits of hygiene. It shows the ruthless attitude of the capitalists. Doctor Havre says, I know that thousand of these coolies may be swept off by the parasites in those wells. It would be criminal not to do anything about it since I know the water supply is infected. And considers the company earns millions of pounds every year from their labour, it wouldn't be a great loss if they spend a lakh to save the coolies from perishing through gnats and vests. This shows that the capitalists are not concerned with the miserable plight of the coolies on the plantation. They are more interested only in their own profits. In one sentence, Havre shows the true picture of exploitation. Another aspect of exploitation is the colonial exploitation for they are categorised on the basis of their language and their look. The coolies on the tea plantation look at the white as their 'Mai Baap' and expect merciful attention from them. But through their brutal treatment the white present themselves as ruling devils. Even the appearance of the White sahib creates panic among them. They create traumatic situation in the minds of the coolies at the entrance itself so that the coolies go pale with fear. The whites look at the coolies as barbarians from the point of view of intellect and culture. They treat them as inferior objects. They call them liars by birth. But the problem is that the Whites pretend to be caretakers of the coolies. Hypocrisy of the whites is also revealed through Croft's statement when he condemns the coolies for their illiteracy in cleanliness and hygiene. When the responsibility of providing clean water lies with them, they blame the coolies for their negligence. They say that the whites are "roasting like a steak on a grill" in Indian climate, when they live in the houses built like Natural Historical Museum, and compel the coolies to live in tin huts which generate unbearable heat. The whites entertain themselves by constructing tennis courts, polo grounds, gardens and clubs but they do not give the coolies with essential amenities. The coolies, on the other hand, live in such lanes

which are so dirty that hookworm breed and thrive are in abundance there. When we read the description of their homes and localities, it reminds us the situation of untouchable residing in street full of mud and dirt. Mulk Raj Anand's delineation of localities and human conditions is very close to reality, the reality of those who live on margins. Anand gives a proper analysis of the ruling attitude of the Whites and the submissiveness of the Blacks. The Whites keep the coolies at the safe distance for two purposes. They think themselves to be superior to the coolies and they are also afraid of them. They always find shortcomings in Indian persons. They call them civilized barbarians who need constant flogging to improve them. They are also of the opinion that without the masters like the British they cannot survive in this world and they can only reside in slave like conditions. So what was the assumption in a country like India, there are some born Dalits and there are some non-Dalits, who live in Dalit conditions because of hierarchical settings. Anand says that cowardliness is also the reason behind their aloofness. The Whites know that they are less in number and if the coolies revolt against them they cannot even protect themselves. They guard their living places as well as places of entertainment from the animals and the black men. Even the planter Croft Cooke considers his life a risky one because he is under the constant threat of the coolies and labour riots. They collect almost instantly in the club whenever there is even a slightest agitation among the coolies. They send the message to call the departments of the company defence such as the Police, the Military and even the Air Force for arms and ammunition to crush the possible revolt. This is a description of the occurrence of resistance to the British or the authorities that put certain communities and groups in Dalit conditions.

Anand had also been influenced by communist movements in India, a movement which favoured the plight of marginalized cultures like Dalit communities and helped in their resistance to the concerned authorities. These Whites in India however create quite a different image of theirs in the Western countries by pretending that the whites are respected in India for their superior clothes, praised for their knowledge and admired for their personal qualities. The new officers from England come to India with that image in their minds but soon come to know that they can control the Indians only by keeping them constantly under pressure and threat. Reggie Hunt represents all the British in India and he believes that 'the colonized "other" deserves to be kept in check by force as they are culturally barbarians' (Gautam, *Legacies* 119). They must be taught to become human beings for they were a thousand years behind. And the Whites could only rule them by putting the fear of God into them and by dealing with them severely when they played monkey tricks. On the contrary, the Indians, the exploited, quite often prepare an easy way for the exploiters by their too servile behaviour. This passive submission to the exploitation at the hands of the rulers is condemned by one of the Whites. Dr. Havre calls the coolies, "docile, gutless, spineless coolies who never raised their voices except on the day of the Holi" (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 148). This overall submissive psyche, according to Anand, is the reason of their victimization.

This submission to victimization is primary in all of Anand's major novels, which highlights a Dalit conditioning. According to Saros Cowasjee, "It does not take long to see that de la Havre is Anand himself, and that Barbara is used as a pretext by the author to give us some unpalatable facts and figures, a word or two about Uncle Tom's Cabin" (89-90). Through Dr. Havre's speech Anand expresses his views about

the capitalist rule: Why does this swarming, under-nourished, bleary, worm eaten millions of India suffers so? Is it because of the festering swamps of the tropics breed disease and that they cannot check the tribulations of destiny? Certainly it seemed to me so; at first that fate had here conspired with the seasons to obliterate everything capriciously. The vast masses, prisoners of so many chains, bearing the physical signs of grief of lassitude, even of death and on the other hand, the elites, covered in their self-assurance and satisfaction and never questioning the ideals of power and wealth. They punish the so called lazy coolies with the help of the Indian supervisors. When the agitation breaks, Reggie Hunt does not hesitate to ride his horse in the thick crowd. Hunt, with his lips tight and his head strung into a wooden hardness, rode his horse into the thick of the crowd, tumbling on the men, women and children who pushed and crouched and ran in utter confusion. Narain displays the cruelty of the estate owners through the stories of the coolies on the tea plantation. They do not hesitate in killing those who try to escape from their prisons. They do not allow the coolies to form their trade unions. Neither do they allow the leaders of the trade union outside to visit the tea estates. They do not allow reporters to enter so that their brutality should not be revealed. Anand was criticized by some critics for exaggerating the colonial exploitation in the Assam tea estates but Saros Cowasjee defended him by saying that most of the facts are based on the report of the Royal Commission of Labour. Sexual exploitation is portrayed as a very common feature of the tea plantation. Nobody's mother or sister or even wife is safe on the tea estate. The women coolies are compelled to work on the wages less than those of the male coolies. They leave their children in the baskets while going to the tea gardens. When they return they find many of them lying in the dust or a drain or even dead on the roadside. The novelist presents this pathetic scene in following words:

Baloo, who was only five, sometimes did ten to twelve cuts a day. And they were really no trouble because they did not have to be left at home. No sooner were they born than they could come with their mothers to the bushes and sleep on the wayside.

A whole gang of sucking humanity lay there under the torrid sun upon the Mother Earth. She herself had spread a ragged piece of blanket for her son on the pathway, but the baby's body was growing strong, for it had rolled into the dust. She rushed towards it and caught it up.

The other day she had come back after plucking and found it lying face downwards in a drain, and the child of a coolie woman from Mahabaleshwar had been discovered lying dead at the foot of a precipice on the south side of the garden. (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 188-189)

The novelist also talks about their indebtedness due to which they cannot move to any other places for work; they are dependent on some specific shops arranged by the employers. He presents the life of the working class people:

The coolie suffers not only this low level of wages but frequently from indebtedness to his employers in outlandish districts where he is dependent upon the shops provided by the employers for his foodstuffs, fuel, etc. This indebtedness, together with the isolation of the plantation, renders it difficult for him to seek employment elsewhere, and this practically reduces him to a life of economic slavery. His treatment often borders on the inhuman and his chances of

justice and redress are chimerical. (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 126)

In urban areas the British behave like logical authorities but in the remote areas like the valley of Assam they behave like wild animals. Motherhood becomes a reason for the death of the women because many children die of malnutrition and lack of proper nourishment. But the mothers keep on giving birth to the babies in order to increase hands to earn their living. The women coolies are compelled to work as rigorously as male coolies. The supervisors are always ready to punish the working women. The picture of a mother who is followed to the work spot even while she is feeding her child shows how inhuman the rulers are even towards the women. The white forces the coolies to hand over their wives and daughters to them for the sake of fun and enjoyment. The young officers like Reggie Hunt are always in search of young girls and women. Narain tells Gangu that Hunt stays with three women who are wives of the coolies. When Hunt comes to the work site he tries to exhibit his boasting personality on the women. Being the masters, they expect that their slaves should offer their wives and daughters to them willingly. Sometimes they bribe the poor husbands by 'bakshish' (small gifts in advance) to win their wives. If they protest they use their guns to frighten them. Reggie Hunt offers five acres of land to Neogi for his wife whereas he lashes one of the coolies, for not handing over his wife to him. When they get exhausted with them they throw them away in order to set the new ones. Here they are not afraid of the poor coolies because they know they will not raise their voice against them. The relationship of Reggie Hunt and Neogi's wife becomes very clear from the talk of Narain's in the novel when he says:

I don't say that everyone gets land by giving his wife, mother or daughter away to the sahibs,' said Narain, dividing Gangu's nervousness, 'But the Reji Sahib is a budmash and Neogi had no choice. He would have lost his job and been lashed as Ranbir, the coolie from Ranchi was lashed, because he refused to give his wife to the Ashashtant planter. The Sahib had Ranbir imprisoned, and took his wife. That bitch was living at the bungalow for months, till the Sahib turned her out and sent her back to the lines a few days ago. (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 171)

The peasants from various parts of the country join the tea estates as coolies in order to save themselves from the poverty and hunger. But both follow them there too like their shadows. Narain comes to the tea estate as victim of the famine. Three of his brothers and two sons die of hunger. Narain and his wife survive by eating the fruits and leaves of trees. They escape from death and come to experience the hell even before the death. Gangu also faces the same destiny. When he broods over his poverty he shows his faith in almighty's benevolent presence. He says, I have always said it and I say it now again that though the earth is bought and sold and confiscated, God never meant that to happen, for he doesn't like some persons to have a comfortable living and others to suffer from dreadful poverty. He has created land enough to maintain all men, and yet many die of hunger and most live under a heavy burden of poverty all their lives, as if the earth were made for a few and not for all men. Deep in his heart, Gangu knows that he has no hope in the tea estates. He not only accepts his destiny but also becomes indifferent to it. However, his life becomes troublesome because of the hard situations; the desire for food marks his existence. The meagre

wages, the penalty to be paid to the office and persistent demand of money from the moneylender are responsible for all these situations. This realization makes him upset. He starts looking at the world with a sense of resignation. There seems to be neither improvement nor escape from the sufferings. Anand talks about wages in the novel:

Wages of coolies on the Indian plantations have not changed for the last seventy years. The wages of a coolie in 1870 were five rupees per month. In 1922, the maximum wages of a coolie on the Assam tea plantations did not exceed seven rupees per month (about ten shillings and sixpence). It should be remarked in this connexion that the price of rice-the coolies' only article of food- has more than doubled during this period. The coolie spends practically the last of his monthly wages on his rice. The clothes or rather rags, worn by the Indian coolie, occupy but an insignificant positions in his budget. (Anand, *Two Leaves and a Bud* 125)

This novel portrays the miseries of the Indian coolies under poverty, hunger, and the multiple dimensions of exploitation. Tracing Gandhian impact on the novel, there are neither Gandhian characters nor Gandhian philosophy directly delivered. But through the conflict between the two groups 'the rulers' and 'the ruled,' Anand shows the Gandhian influence. The conflict is pitched between the exploiter who represent violence and the exploited that represent submissiveness as a part of 'non violence'.

Two Leaves and a Bud defines the essential relation between the domination of the authority and exploitation over the marginalized humans. However, the major idea in the novel is not free from the predominance with class conflicts, existence of

non-economic problems like that of domination is also prevalent. This is the acute condition which resembles with the Dalit conditioning, where society is divided socially and economically both. The ecological dimensions of colonial invasion are merged with its political aspects. The appropriation of the land by alien forces is treated as not just an economic and political problem but an ethical and ecological issue as well, giving the message that the natural cannot be divorced from the economical and the political. The novel contains as strong an indictment of capitalism as Coolie. The protagonist, Gangu is an innocent victim of the changing economic order which dispossesses and uproots the peasants from their secure natural abodes to be vanquished by the forces of capitalism. Invited by the prospects of a well-paid job and deceived by the offer of a plot of land, which the native agent knowing the peasant well enough, throws as a bait, he leaves his half-acre in the Hoshiarpur village and crosses India horizontally to the promised land of the McPherson tea estate in Assam. The heavy injustice of the system is perceived by the uneducated peasant Gangu as well. He expresses his protest against it in plain but powerful words. He believes that though the earth is bought and sold and confiscated, God never meant that to happen, for he does not like some persons to have a comfortable living and others to suffer from dire poverty. He has created land enough to maintain all men, and yet many die of hunger and most live under a heavy burden of poverty all their lives, as if the earth was made for a few and not for all men. The idea of industrialism and money hoarding by which the landlords and money lenders of Gangu's village and the colonial plantation owners are guided, is an obvious transgression of this fundamental precept of natural justice. The imperial overlords are led by the illusion that not only the land that they have conquered but also the living and non-living resources on it belong to them and are at their arrangement. The natural resources as

well as the people of the poor countries of Asia and Africa served to develop surplus capital with which the maritime nations built empires. The colonies fuelled the rapid growth of the empires supplying them with not only primary commodities and cheap labour but also a market for the manufactured goods. In *Apology* Anand comments on how the plundered wealth of India facilitated the primary accumulation of capital and the development of capitalist enterprise in England in the latter part of the eighteenth century and consequently the world market was flooded with cheap machine-made goods such as textiles. Hundreds of Indian peasants were condemned to live and toil in stiflingly congested and repugnantly polluted atmosphere to provide the British in India and at home with all the luxury they needed. The British like John de la Havre are rejected by the unethical system that allows such inhuman exploitation. In an entry in his diary De la Havre expresses his indignation about the outrageous and inhuman policy of exploitation followed by his compatriots. The most disturbing aspect of this exploitation reflects itself in the system known as indentured labour. De La Havre describes it as curse and a 'monstrous crime against humanity', and in his opinion all that was said generations ago by the Wilberforces and Cannings and Garrisons and Lincolns against the ugly shame of slavery could be repeated and added to in respect of what was transpiring on the tea, coffee, rubber and other plantations in India. The plight of the poor peasants who were enticed by the fantastic promises invented by the crooked agents and brought to the plantations was hardly different from that of the slaves, except that they were not sold and bought. They found themselves in a prison without bars from which there was no escape until death. They are very well aware that it is a futile dream as there are the chowkidars keeping guard over the plantations, and deserters are brought back and dealt with most severely. Anand has taken up the problem of the appropriation and alienation of labour as one of the prominent themes

in *Two Leaves and a Bud*. The title of the novel bears an intrinsic association with its thematic content and vision of the Marxist representation of social vision. In India the influence of Marxism affected the perception of caste issue. For instance the Dalits have been identified as working class people and their problems discussed as the problems of the workers. The plantation workers engaged in the mechanical process of plucking the tea leaves go on chanting mechanically, "two leaves and a bud, two leaves and a bud." The humdrum chant reflects the alienation and monotony of the unrewarded and uncreative life led by them. The labourer is robbed not only of the material rewards for his toil but the pleasure he should naturally derive from the physical exercise. The picture of Gangu alone on the hillside, tilling the plot of land, which he has come to possess after many a month of waiting and longing, serves to impress this point upon the readers.

Anand, automatically, gets indulged in describing the problems of workers in the background of beautiful landscapes in *Two Leaves and a Bud*. The narrative is richly interlaced with topographical descriptions. Anand has observed in his introduction to the book that his attempt to evoke the varying moods of the beautiful Eastern Indian landscape makes the novel more complex than *Untouchable* or *Coolie*. There is a long train journey which seems to be purposefully included to provide a context for a prolonged description of the landscape, transmitting the varying colour, contours and moods with photographic faithfulness. As in *Untouchable* and *Coolie*, it is clearly suggested in the novel that natural beauty means little to man in a state of subjectivity and deprivation. The workers in the plantation, chained to the mechanical process of capitalist production are insensitive to the beauty around them. The luxuriant green of the mountains around and the lustre of the sky fail to stimulate their

souls deadened by oppression and misery. The passive submission of the native workers to the ruthless exploitation and persistent ill-treatment at the hands of the colonial masters illustrates the way alienation through categorisation minimizes the potential for resistance. The instance of spirit of rebellion in them, when one of them is brutally shot down by Reggie Hunt, is easily washed away by the British masters. Mortally frightened by the threats hurled at them by the white men armed with the machines, they readily relapse into their mute victim roles. Their servility is to some extent ethnological in origin, springing from an inherent feeling of inferiority to the whites who make them extremely liable to physical attacks and to atrocities. The novel deals with conflict and oppression as a multiform phenomena dwelling with equal priority on its racial, colonial and capitalist dimensions. An absurd idea of white man's unquestionable superiority over the blacks is the mainspring of the arrogance and brutality of British men like Croft-Cooke and Reggie Hunt. Reggie imagines himself to be Napoleon Bonaparte which is a clear indication of his insatiable lust for power. He treats the coolies as property to be used to indulge his whims, to quench 'the oppressive urge of his hot stead fast lust' or to satisfy his sadistic impulses. The narrative dramatises the conflict between the oppressor and the oppressed, between the exploiter and the exploited and Gangu in his various roles-- as a dispossessed peasant, as an indentured labourer, as a citizen of a country under the yoke of imperialism-- is at one end of the vicious circle. Reggie Hunt represents the other end in its extreme monstrosity.

In *Two Leaves and a Bud*, as in the two earlier novels there are unmistakable indications of the gradual erosion of Anand's faith in machines. The war and the operational methods of imperialism and capitalism have brought to him the realization

that technology serves only to widen the gap between the privileged and the underprivileged by enhancing the exploitative potential of the forces of domination and intensifying the fear and inertia of the victims. The incidents at the plantation show how the machine becomes an enemy to man, an instrument of oppression in the hands of unscrupulous men ruled by the instinct to dominate. Gangu is fascinated by 'the masculine plough with which he had seen the engineer sahib working on a bare patch of the plateau', but the beauty of that wonderful machine is spoiled by the haughty arrogance of the assistant planter who went about ordering men with the sweeping gesture of his whip. Anand believes that machines are wonderful, and what spoils their beauty is the perverted tendency of people like Reggie who go around with a whip in hand, eager to establish their sway over everything. Whenever their feeling of security is shaken by the slightest token of unrest among the workers, the white people at the plantation resort to the machines of terror --guns and aeroplanes. "The Steel birds" (aeroplanes) are brought to relegate them back into quiet servility and as anticipated by the sadistic British masters, "utter pandemonium broke out as the ignorant coolies ran about in panic, frightened to death by 'the droning birds'. Gangu is shot to death by the lecherous sahib who goes mad with his irrepressible lust for his daughter Leila. He is a direct victim of the brutal arrogance of imperialist racism unlike Munoo whose life withers away under the uncongenial conditions created together by his fate and colonial capitalism. In all the descriptions the main idea highlights the plight of those who are marginalised divided on the basis of caste and hierarchy; and exploited in such a way as there is no way out.

The novel ends with the murder of Gangu and guiltless Reggie Hunt raising the question mark on the judicial system of British imperialism. Edward W. Said

strongly argues about the brutality and act of violence meted out in the colonies by the British who considered themselves as legislators of the world.

Dismissed or forgotten were the ravaged colonial people who for centuries endured summary justice, unending economic oppression, distortion of their social and intimate lives and a resource less submission that was the function of unchanging European superiority. Only to keep in mind the millions of Africans who were supplied to slave trade is to acknowledge the unimaginable cost of maintaining superiority. (22)

6.4 Summing up: Hence, at the end of the chapter in the light of above discussion, it can be said that the colonial exploitation by the British is also similar to the exploitation on the grounds of casteism. The predicament of peasants and workers echoes the traumatic lives of Dalit characters. Dalit consciousness is ready to include all kinds of exploitations which are based on the idea of hierarchy. In the colonial period the peasants and workers were variously exploited. In *Two Leaves and a Bud*, we see episodes of slave treatment and sexual exploitation which are relevant issues of discussion in Dalit consciousness.

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Chapter –7
CONCLUSION

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CONCLUSION

7.1 Conclusion: In the foregoing chapters the researcher has sought to discover the sensibility and impulse as manifested in the fictional works of Mulk Raj Anand. For the purpose of study and investigation the researcher selected three novels of Anand including *Untouchable*, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*. The study has followed a logic and dynamic of its own. After stating the hypothesis or the research question in the introduction chapter, the study proceeds to examine the different contours of the problem by examining the artistic merits of the novelist and by analysing the techniques and methods by which his writings struggle to achieve a perfect meeting between the philosophical influences, social manifestations and literary aims. There is no act of pretending nevertheless that a satisfactory solution to the assumption posed is found. But, certainly Anand's writings provide space and scope for the influential establishment of Dalit Consciousness and its interpolation in terms of the theme and presentation of real social problems. After reading the novels of Mulk Raj Anand and executing a keen analysis of the same, one cannot fail to perceive the underpinning ideologies like Marxism and Gandhism. In other words he has a basic perception of his society and the different organisms and structures that constitute the realities and basic tendencies. The notion of Dalit Consciousness has been analysed in his select novels and this interpolation is not simply a clarification but related with an extension in the field of English studies.

First chapter is about statement of intent and the second chapter discusses the survey of Dalit literature in India and in detail the notion of Dalit Consciousness. One of the main features of the development of Dalit Consciousness is the protest and

rejection of Brahmanism. Nevertheless, it is not against the Brahmins. The Brahmanism is a mental state which accepts superiority over another man. It sets inferiority in the mind of another person in the hierarchy of caste system. Through his pathetic, sensitive and realistic representations, Mulk Raj Anand highlights his thoughts and protesting attitude in understanding the harsh realities of the social life in India. Anand has written revolutionary novels, which deals with outcastes as the chief protagonists. His heroes present all untouchables in India and their common day problems in real life. He wants to remove the evil of caste system and wants to create in readers an urgent awareness of the immoral social evil and to stimulate the common thinking for the removal of these social evils in order that a desirable or a just social order may come into being.

In the third chapter, there is a brief introduction to the formative and intellectual development of the artist and how he had been influenced by various philosophers like Gandhi, Tagore and Karl Marx. Mulk Raj Anand's novels display a vivid picture of Indian society, where the issues of caste and other hierarchical divisions are visible. In all of his writings, he discussed his compassion as a humanist throughout the narratives and revealed the actual face of social problems. This chapter also shares a brief discussion on some of his writings, famous writings.

In the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters a detailed study has been made about Dalit Consciousness in the novels of Anand including *Untouchable*, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*, respectively. Anand has technically hit the basic stone of the social life and motivated his readers to fight against the suffering of marginalized communities. In and through all his novels and protagonists Anand has tried to define the reasons and explanations regarding the issue of slave tradition. All his heroes are

identified in this slave predicament at the end of the novel. When they reach closer to the success, they meet with utter failure and disillusionment in life. His characters, especially the main characters, comprise the tensions caused by the conflict of human nature and assumptions of humanism. After all, the gap between the real and ideal in life is what provides meaning to the difference between privileged men and others who are unprivileged. It seems an inseparable part of human life.

Therefore, the researcher has examined both Anand and his works of art from these criteria. To support the statement of thesis, there has been given a comprehensive review of the famous literature of Mulk Raj Anand and the critical comments by scholars both Indian and foreign, who have written critical commentaries on Anand's novels and performance as a writer. The foreign critics, including the big names like Saros Cowasjee, are more positive and constructive although they boldly point out his weaknesses and limitations as a writer. Some Indian scholars and critics show sharper insight into Anand's personality and philosophical background and therefore their analyses of individual novels are more revealing, enlightening and captivating. On the contrary, there are Indian critics who have taken it upon themselves to criticise Anand by exposing his stylistic deviations. The last chapter Conclusion as its name suggests, gives the summary of each chapter of thesis, and it also talks about future scope for research on Anand, limitations and suggestions.

The foregoing study had the burden of examining the Dalit consciousness in Anand as a novelist of India. The underlying assumption in this study was that the perspective of Dalit identity and problems should permeate the stories and themes of an Indian novelist who professes commitment to the people whose lives and struggles,

he claims to portray. It was therefore a search or investigation based on the hypothesis that popular themes of Dalit conditioning should meet the approaches, content and message of his novels. As a result of this deep study, analysis and interpretation of select novels of Anand, it has been possible for us to discover the elements of marginalized identities, sentiments, themes, vision, approaches in the author.

7.2 Limitations, Suggestions and Recommendations:

There have been some limitations in the course of this research like the study of Dalit Consciousness demands a detailed study of Dalit literature and movements; it also demands a practical survey that can identify their present state of life in twenty first century. This study was a bit of inter-disciplinary study so it was not possible to trace the real sociological patterns of Dalit life in the given time for the research but the researcher has tried at the best to present a real observation made through books by thinkers and critics of Dalit theory.

If there is some specific areas for further research, these are like study of the novelist's ability to design a story out of the conflicts existential struggle of the Dalit communities; there may be a study following interdisciplinary techniques of involving psychological investigations of Dalit characters and their delineation as life like characters; and there can be a subaltern study of the novels of Mulk Raj Anand. The comparative innovative and creative potential of this novelist, who is one of the famous trio (R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao and Mulk Raj Anand) of Indian writings, can be assessed and compared with the novelists of other Indian languages. As a suggestion it can be stated that the future researchers should provide space to personal philosophy of Mulk Raj Anand, which might get overshadowed by the philosophies

of those who influenced him. This problem can be solved by having an extensive chronological study of the novelist. Anand's fluency and range is a powerful exercise of the English language and his stubborn arguments stand for the eradication of various types of inequalities, injustices and other social problems in India.

As per the suggestion there are quite a few novelists in various Indian languages who are concerned with the plight of Dalits in the sense of Anand, it should be fascinating to make a comparative study of Anand and any other Indian novelist writing in an Indian language. Such an investigation is bound to yield rare and precious insights that will enrich reading of such novelist and provide new stream and areas for criticism and comparative literature. A critical study of Anand's use of indigenous cultural symbols such as folk stories, songs, rituals, beliefs, myths in his novels can be taken as a valuable research subject. Another fruitful area of further investigation may be a comparative study of Anand and any Dalit writer using Marxism or Gandhism as the points of discussion. As we all know that these two historical movements have influenced and shaped Indian and African thought-patterns, attitudes and practices, in one way or another, it will be a valid starting point for a fruitful research work. It can also be suggested that Anand as novelist has been very less investigated through postmodern theories and philosophies which can provide some interesting developments in the study of Mulk Raj Anand. So the future researchers can have some suggestions from postmodern theorist and scholars in order to have different observation on his writings.

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